

A Sociological Analysis of Gender in Marxist Theory

by

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PREFACE

This study is a response to questions I was confronted with and found myself unable to answer. Until I was twelve years old everything was beautiful and everyboby was happy - like a medieval painting. But when I realized that many people in this country were extremely poor and suffering, the painting was smashed to pieces. This development was accompanied by ever arising problems - racism, militarization and the human destruction of nature. Although marxism served as a theoretical tool in my attempts to understand these problems, I found it reductionist and inadequate to link the general and more specific relations of exploitation and objectification that characterize our society. Somewhere there was a missing link.

ABSTRACT

IN THIS STUDY I ARGUE THAT MARXISM HAS PAYED FAR TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR ON SOCIAL STRUCTURE. CONSEQUENTLY, MARXISM HAS BEEN UNABLE TO PLACE WOMEN'S EXPLOITATION WITHIN A GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF EXPLOITATION, OBJECTIFICATION AND DOMINATION. IN AN ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME THIS SHORTCOMING, I CRITICALLY ANALYSE THE INTERACTION OF "LABOUR" AND "GENDER" WITHIN THE STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK OF A CONTEMPORARY CAPITALIST PATRIARCHAL INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY.

MY ANALYSIS IS CARRIED OUT WITHIN A MATERIALIST RESEARCH TRADITION. I FOCUS ON THE DOMESTIC MODE OF REPRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION AND ANALYSE THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR IN THIS MODE. FOR THIS PURPOSE I ASSESS DIFFERENT THEORIES OF GENDER CREATION AND THE INFLUENCE OF MOTHER-MONOPOLIZED CHILDBREARING ON GENDER CREATION AND ON THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN GENERAL.

IN WORKING WITH THE INTERACTION OF "LABOUR" AND "GENDER" I ADDRESS THE POSSIBILITY OF A GENDER-CLASS ANALYSIS. FOR THIS PURPOSE I REFORMULATE THE MARXIST INTERPRETATION OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN LABOUR POWER, SURPLUS VALUE, EXCHANGE VALUE AND USE VALUE. I ALSO ASSESS THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE WAGES-FOR-HOUSEWORK DEBATE TO A GENDER-CLASS ANALYSIS.

FINALLY I ARGUE THAT "GENDER" MAKES A FUNDAMENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO A POSSIBLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERRELATION OF EXPLOITATION, OBJECTIFICATION AND DOMINATION IN A CONTEMPORARY CAPITALIST PATRIARCHAL INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY.

PROBLEM SYNOPSIS

The transformation of a biological being into a human being is the result of a complex social process. The fundamental dynamics of this social process are social structures. These social structures within which the human being is formed, constitute the basic and constant framework according to which the specific human being interprets and reacts towards its world. For the purpose of social theory, human beings must be situated within their specific social structures. The basic task of the social scientist is to uncover and analyse the social dynamics of a particular society.

Different research traditions focus on different phenomena as being the most important in the process of social organization. Within the marxist research tradition "labour" is such a phenomenon. Notwithstanding the importance of labour for social organization, the basic assumption of this study is that marxism has paid far too little attention to the influence of the gender division of labour on the social structure. Consequently, marxism has been unable to place women's exploitation within a general framework of exploitation, objectification and domination. In an attempt to overcome this shortcoming, I shall critically analyse the interaction of "labour" and "gender" within the structural framework of a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society. My analysis will be carried out within a materialist research tradition.

In Chapter 1, I shall formulate and briefly analyse the central phenomena present in classical marxist writings on what has come to be called the "woman question". In this chapter I focus on the work of Marx and Engels on matriarchy, the family, marriage, the gender division of labour, patriarchy, class, and the relationship between production and reproduction.

In Chapter 2, I formulate a framework for a contemporary materialist analysis specifically aimed at incorporating "gender" as a fundamental social dynamic. For this purpose I diagrammatically formulate contemporary feminist theories. Secondly, I define the fundamental issues on which marxism (with regard to the "woman question") is questioned today. Thirdly, I briefly address these issues in my formulation of a contemporary materialist framework that can be used to analyse the position of women as women in a contemporary patriarchal capitalist industrial society.

Chapter 3 deals with the interaction of "gender" and "labour" within a specific socio-political milieu, as the latter has a significant influence on the interaction and the particular form of the former. I focus on the influence and importance of "power" on the interaction of "gender" and "labour" in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society.

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to answer three questions. First, what is the difference between "sex" and "gender"? Second, how is gender created? In this section I shall critically assess Freudian psychoanalytic, Social learning and Cognitive developmental theory. Third, what is the influence of the socio-political milieu on gender creation and vice versa? For this purpose I focus on the system of reproduction, the social system of mother-monopolized childrearing, and the family as the unit within which reproduction takes place.

In Chapter 5, I analyse the "gender division of labour" within the structural framework of a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society. For this purpose I define the social dynamics of "labour" and analyse the contribution of anthropology to our understanding of the "gender division of labour". Finally I clarify and critically assess the materialist inter-relationship between the con-

cepts "labour power", "exchange value", "use value" and "surplus value" in the light of the above analysis.

Chapter 6 deals with the historical debate on "wages of housework" and assess the contribution of the debate to a materialist social theory of the gender division of labour in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society. In Chapter 7, I first define the marxist criteria for a "class" and then analyse the possibility whether women as women constitute a class within a materialist research tradition. I then analyse the influence of my above conclusion on social theory itself. In the final section of this chapter, I focus on the interaction of "gender", "class" and "race" in South Africa.

In the final chapter, Chapter 8, I shall incorporate the differences I have with a classical contemporary marxism into the formulation of a materialist social framework. In my conclusion I shall assess the specific and general contribution of "gender" to our understanding of the social dynamics of a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society.

CHAPTER 1

CLASSICAL MARXISM AND WOMEN

1.1 Problem synopsis

The purpose of this chapter is to formulate and briefly analyse the central phenomena present in classical marxist writings on what has come to be called the "woman question". I focus on the work of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on matriarchy, the family, marriage, the gender division of labour, patriarchy, class, and the relationship between production and reproduction.

1.2 Introduction

For Marx human beings are natural creatures ("nature is 'man's inorganic body'" [Marx, quoted by Lever, 1982 : 13]) who differ from other animals because of their ability to perform creative labour.(1) Labour in itself is thus the central and essential phenomenon for social existence. Through the labour process human needs are both created and satisfied, in so far as human needs are socially conditioned. "The scope of man's so-called necessary needs, as also the mode of satisfying them is itself the product of historical development and depends therefore to a great extent on the degree of civilization of a country" (Marx, quoted by Lever, 1982 : 13). For Marx the "degree of civilization" is in itself dependent on the development of the labour process (see 5.2 below). In the sense that both creative capacities and human needs change and develop historically, history is created by human beings.

At a given moment in time an individual is part of a specific form of society and the production of the individual thus takes place within a specific set of relations of production (Giddens, 1971 : 35). For Marx, the relations of production are

those relations between human beings which have to do with the production and reproduction of the material aspects of social life; in other words, with the production, exchange and distribution of material goods. On the other hand, the forces of production consist of the means of production (including raw materials - land, plants, domestic animals, etc. - and the instruments of labour), and the human capacity to perform creative labour (labour-power). In the process of interaction between the forces and relations of production, the mode of production is established (see 8.2 below). The mode of production forms the material base of society. Together with the superstructure (in other words; political, legal, religious and cultural institutions and ideology), the material base forms the social eco-system of society (see 8.2 below).

The relationship between the base and the superstructure is dialectical. Not only does the base determine the general character of the superstructure, but the superstructure itself has an influence on the base (Althusser, 1977 : 205). However, this dialectical relationship is always ("in the last instance") determined by the base (mode of production) and thus by the labour process within which individuals reproduce and produce both themselves and goods (as members of a society).

Within the labour process, control of the means of production (and thus, for Marx, consequently of the forces of production) enables those in control to appropriate some of the labour-power of the other participants within the labour process. For Marx and Engels "the history of all existing societies is [thus] the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitu-

tion of a society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 35-36).

A class society is divided into the bourgeoisie (oppressor) and the proletariat (oppressed). The basis of the conflict (and separation) between the classes is the relationship of each to the mode of production. For the bourgeoisie this relationship is one of ownership (private property) and thus of control. For the proletariat it is one of non-ownership and thus of being controlled. The proletariat are exploited by the bourgeoisie because the bourgeoisie has the means to extract surplus value from the labour of the proletariat. This appropriation/exploitation constitutes the proletariat's oppression. The class structure is thus rooted in the material base of society.

In classical marxism women as women are not seen as having an unique relation to the mode of production, and consequently no class analysis of women is carried out (see 5.2, 5.5, 7.2 and 7.3 below). As only classes can be exploited, women as women can thus not be exploited. Nevertheless, Marx and Engels did work with the assumption that some women were oppressed. Since marxists insist on a materialist explanation of the causes of social inequality, idealist explanations that link the oppression of women to values, ideologies, norms and so on are rejected since they confuse intermediate variables with ultimate causes. Marxists look beyond superstructural issues to the material base of the oppression of women. In doing this, classical marxists analysing women's position in society took as their basic question "the relationship of women to the economic system, rather than that of women to men, apparently assuming the latter will be explained in their discussion of the former" (Hartmann, 1980 : 24).

Within classical marxism there are three distinct and contradictory approaches to women's oppression. First, the "capitalism argument": women's position/oppres-

sion in society is dependent on the development of capitalism (see Vogel, 1979 : 52). Second, the "social-production argument": women's position/oppression is dependent on their position within the sphere of social production. As women do not primarily (and to the extent men do) produce products with exchange value (see 5.4 below) in the sphere of social production, the position of women in this sphere is the basis of the position/oppression of women within, for example, the family. Third, the "family argument": women's position/oppression in society as a whole is dependent on women's position/oppression within the family, through which they have limited access to, and deformed participation in, the social sphere of socially valued production. This in itself then reinforces women's position/oppression.(2)

Despite these differences (which are essentially contradictory), a general classical marxist approach to the "woman question" can be formulated to read in this way. First: women were not always the oppressed sex. Classical marxist studies of women (especially the work of Engels) rely on the anthropological work of Lewis Morgan (*Ancient Society*) and Jacob Bachofen (*Mutterrecht*). Both these anthropologists are exponents of the "matriarchal school of thought". Equality in matriarchal society centres on the complementary relationship between the sexes within the epoch of tribal collectivism (Engels, 1972 : 218).(3) Although a "sexual" [gender] division of labour did exist, it was characterized by a complementary relation of power/dependency (Aaby, 1977 : 34). The "sexual" [gender] division of labour in itself is thus not seen as a cause of oppression.

Second: the oppression of women started when the matriarchal clan commune was replaced by a class-divided society, which in itself was the result of the replacement of tribal collectivism with private property. With the development of private property came not only a class-divided society, but also the institutions of the patriarchal family and the state which led to drastic social changes. "With

the patriarchal family and still more with the single monogamous family, a change came. Household management lost its public character. It no longer concerned society. It became a private service; the wife became the head servant, excluded from all participation in social production" (Engels, 1972 : 137).

Third: besides the reality that this new form of the family gave the husband control over his wife's labour ("the modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife..." [Engels, 1972 : 137]), it also gave him control over her reproduction and thus assured him of legitimate sons to inherit his wealth. Private property not only formed the material base for the new productive relations, but also for the change in the social structure of reproduction (as both the productive and reproductive relations are determined by the mode of production).

Fourth: although Engels wrote, "within the family he is the bourgeoisie, and the wife represents the proletariat" (Engels, 1972 : 137), classical (and most contemporary) marxists do not view women as a separate social class or social caste. A marxist class is defined in two interrelated ways: "...by the role it plays in the process of production and by the stake it has in the ownership of property" (Reed, 1978 : 114). Because women as women are seen to have no unique relationship to these criteria, they are seen as a multiclass sex (as men are). Thus, as one finds bourgeois men, one finds bourgeois women. Women are not by definition part of the proletariat (or the bourgeoisie). In other words, not all women are oppressed, and the struggle of women is restricted to working-class women. The struggle of women and the struggle against capitalism are one - there is nothing unique to the liberation of women. "Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 42).

Fifth: when women performed domestic labour within their own domestic units, they did not produce surplus value which was then expropriated from them (Middleton, 1982 : 187). These women had thus no direct relation to the social class structure. This resulted from the reality that they were then cut off from all social production. For this reason, Engels concludes that "...the first condition for the liberation of the wife is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry, and this in turn demands that the characteristic of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society be abolished" (Engels, 1972 : 137-138).

Sixth: in summary, the classical marxist method sees the oppression of women as the result of revolutionary social change (not of any biological deficiency of the sex), which destroyed the egalitarian society of the matriarchal clan commune and replaced it with a class-divided society which is patriarchal in character (Reed, 1978 : 108). The material base for the patriarchal society is the capitalist mode of production.

1.3 Some inherent theoretical problems

1.3.1 Matriarchy

For Engels, all forms of group family are characterized by certainty of biological motherhood and uncertainty of biological fatherhood.⁽⁴⁾ "It is therefore clear that in so far as group marriage prevails, descent can only be proved on the mother's side and that therefore only the female line is recognized" (Engels, 1972 : 106). Since power and control within the kinship system are (for Engels) directly related to descent, a matrilineal society is also matriarchal, in other words ruled by women.

The concept "matriarchy" is central in classical marxist writings on women. Matriarchy (or mother-right) historically preceded patriarchy and the transition to the latter coincided with the subordination of women to men. Matriarchy is

thus used not only to explain social development historically, but also to show that patriarchy can be overthrown, because matriarchy (as the predecessor and direct opposite of patriarchy) is a social creation and thus dependent on historical changes in the material base of society. For Engels, the existence of patriarchy is also of central importance in a social analysis of the interdependence of the monogamous family and the state. The existence of matriarchy would seriously question "the absurd assumption, which since the eighteenth century in particular has become inviolable, that the monogamous single family, which is hardly older than civilization, is the core around which society and the state have gradually crystallized" (Engels, 1972 :164).

Matriarchy, as used in classical marxism, is problematic on three counts: first, the methodology of the argument used in favour of the existence of matriarchy; second, the logic of the hypothesis of the transition from a matriarchal to a patriarchal society formulated by Engels and third, the material base that Engels supplies for his analysis.(5)

First of all, let us examine the methodology of the argument used in favour of the existence of matriarchy. Engels (in *The Origin of the Family*) relied on Bachofen's mother-right hypothesis. Bachofen's hypothesis can be summarized as follows. Originally humans lived in a state of sexual promiscuity. This promiscuity excluded certainty of paternity. Descent could thus only be reckoned in the female line. Because it was only certain who the mother of the child was, women (as mothers) were highly "respected" and "honoured". This respect and honour formed the foundation of matriarchal rule.

For Engels "communistic housekeeping ... means the supremacy of women in the house; just as the exclusive recognizing of the female parent, owing to the impossibility of recognizing the male parent with certainty, means that the

women - the mothers - are held in high respect. One of the most absurd notions taken from eighteenth century enlightenment is that in the beginning of society woman was the slave of man" (Engels, 1972 : 113). For Bachofen matriarchy declined when men started to violate primitive religious law (which stated that all women belonged equally to all men) by claiming individual exclusive rights over specific women (see Engels, 1972 : 75-76).

Engels's reading of Bachofen is problematic on the following issues. Engels recognised that, "according to Bachofen, it is not the development of men's actual conditions of life, but the religious reflection of these conditions inside their heads, which has brought about the historical changes in the social position of the sexes in relation to each other" (Engels, 1972 : 76). Despite this clearly non-materialist analysis of social change (Bachofen is using intermediate variables to explain ultimate causes which should be materialist in character), Engels nevertheless placed a very high value on Bachofen's theory ("The study of the history of the family dates from 1861, from the publication of Bachofen's 'Mutterrecht'" - Engels, 1972 : 75). Secondly, if all women belonged equally to all men, then women were not equal (or superior) to men, but indeed "objects" of ownership.

The Origin of the Family furthermore relied on Morgan's theory of the primitive matriarchal gens and the development of the family in accordance with the system of consanguinity. Morgan's theory is based on the assumption that kin terms represent an actual and/or possible biological relationship. For Morgan, the primitive matriarchal gens is thus the earlier stage of the patriarchal gens of civilized people. Morgan's argument is based on the importance of the system of consanguinity for social change and on the assumption that the form of the family corresponds to the system of consanguinity. Descent is thus a central phenomenon in Morgan's analysis, and societies characterized by matrilineal descent would

consequently be matriarchal societies. (See Thomson, 1978 : 144-145 for a discussion of linguistic evidence of matrilineal descent.)

Whereas archaeological and ethnological research seems to confirm Morgan's thesis on the importance of the tribal system in the initial stages of social evolution (Thomson, 1978 : 41-57), Morgan's theory (and Engels's use of it) is problematic on three counts. First, the origin of matrilineal descent: Morgan's argument that descent was necessarily matrilineal because paternity was unknown is problematic since there is no evidence that significance was attached to individual parenthood within the social system characterized by group marriage (see Howitt, 1904 : 756-766). On the contrary, for Thomson, "it was the progressive definition of individual parenthood, determined by the growth of individual rights of property, that destroyed collective marriage" (Thomson, 1978 : 43).

Secondly, matrilineal descent in itself does not necessarily mean that society is controlled by women (that it is matriarchal). "In many, perhaps most, of the matrilineal tribes known to us the actual control is in male hands" (Thomson, 1978 : 149). Thirdly, whereas Morgan argued that kin terms represent an actual and/or possible biological relationship, the literal biological meaning of such terms is secondary to their social implications.

Since Engels did not question the link between matrilineal descent and matriarchy, he argued that although societies characterized by matrilineal descent had a system of "sexual" [gender] division of labour, there was no "sex" [gender] antagonism. Women controlled the means of production inside the domestic unit, and men those outside the domestic unit. "They are each master in their own sphere: the man in the forest, the woman in the house. Each is owner of the instruments which he or she makes and uses: the man of the weapons, the hunting and fishing implements; the woman of the household gear" (Engels, 1972 : 218).

For Engels the relationship between the "sexes" [genders] in this society was thus characterized by a complementary relation of power and dependence. As men and women do not control the same resources, one "sex" [gender] may increase its power (and decrease its dependence) if the products which that "sex" [gender] controls increase in importance for the process of the social production and social reproduction of the group as a whole. With the intensification of production outside the home environment this did indeed happen (Engels, 1972 : 119).

The increase in production in itself led to the creation of a surplus that could be exchanged. The complementary relation of power and dependence between the "sexes" [genders] thus faded and men gained superiority. "The division of labour within the family had regulated the division of property between the man and the woman. That division of labour had remained the same; and yet it now turned the previous domestic relation upside down, simply because the division of labour outside the family had changed. The same cause which had ensured to the woman her previous supremacy in the house - that her activity was confined to domestic labour - this same cause now ensured the man's supremacy in the house. The domestic labour of the woman no longer counted beside the acquisition of the necessities of life by the man; the latter was everything, the former an important extra" (Engels, 1972 : 221). This imbalance of power for Engels led to the overthrow of the mother right.

Engels's theory of the overthrow of the mother right is the second difficulty I have with his treatment of matriarchy. One should not only question the actual existence of matriarchy, but also the inherent logic of the hypothesis of the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy. Although Engels wrote, "as to how and when this revolution [the overthrow of the mother right] took place among civilized people, we have no knowledge. It fell entirely within prehistoric times" (Engels,

1972 : 120), he nevertheless did provide a hypothesis. "As wealth increased it made the man's position in the family more important than the woman's, and on the other hand created an impulse to exploit this strengthened position in order to overthrow, in favour of his children, the traditional order of inheritance. This, however, was impossible as long as descent was reckoned according to mother right. Mother right, therefore, had to be overthrown, and overthrown it was" (Engels, 1972 : 119).

It seems that Engels in the above quotation actually presupposed the origin of the circumstances he is trying to explain, namely that of class-divided (accumulation of private wealth) and patriarchal society. Furthermore, Engels does not supply a material base to explain this drastic (in his own words "revolutionary"; Engels, 1972 : 120) social change. Instead he uses certain socially created human needs, which are part of the superstructure, as the catalyst for social change. His method is thus one of evolutionary functionalism. The implications of this are not restricted to this specific case, for a substantial amount of his own (and other classical marxist theorists') work on women is evolutionarily functionalist in character and materialist only in name.

For Engels, the overthrow of the mother right is of central importance in his hypothesis explaining the position of women in a capitalist society. "The overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children" (Engels, 1972 : 120).

A third problem in Engels's account of matriarchy is that of a material base. "The communistic household, in which most or all of the women belong to one and the same gens, while the men come from various gentes, is the material foun-

dition of the supremacy of the women which was general in primitive times, and which is Bachofen's third great merit to have discovered" (Engels, 1972 : 113). Later in the same paragraph he continues: "The division of labour between the two sexes is determined by quite other causes than by the position of women in society" (Engels, 1972 : 113). The material base that Engels supplies for the matriarchy is thus indeed based on a "sexual [gender] mode of reproduction" and not on a mode of production. Within his own theoretical method he thus fails to give matriarchy a material base.

1.3.2 The family

In this section I shall concentrate on a critical summary of Engels's account of the development of the family. As I have already mentioned, Engels uses Morgan's *Ancient Society* and Bachofen's *Mutterrecht* as the basis of his theory of the development of the family. Since Morgan's work is evolutionarily functionalist in character, the core notion of his work is that human history is defined in terms of successive stages. This method is central to most nineteenth century historical theorists. Engels postulated family relationships to parallel the stages of evolution. For Morgan, the three main epochs of human history were savagery, barbarism and civilization. His *Ancient Society* concentrates on the first two stages. Both these stages are classified into lower, middle and upper stages (see Engels's summary in Engels, 1972 : 87-93). The four different stages of the family are (according to Morgan and Engels): consanguine, punaluan, pairing and monogamous.

For Morgan the direct predecessor of the family is a period of promiscuous sexual behaviour in which unrestricted sexual freedom prevailed within the tribe ("...every woman belonging equally to every man and every man to every woman" [Engels, 1972 : 97]). This period did not endure because of the

"development of jealousy" (Engels, 1972 : 100). For Morgan the inherent principle of the evolution and development of the family was the progressive avoidance of incest. Together with the "development of jealousy" (Engels, 1972 :97), the "invention of incest" (Engels, 1972 : 101) "created" the circumstances for the evolution and development of the first form of the human family, the consanguine family.

In the consanguine family marriage groups are separated according to generation. (6) "In primitive times the sister was the wife, and that was moral" (Marx, quoted by Engels, 1972 : 102). According to Engels the consanguine family is extinct, "even the most primitive peoples known to history provide no demonstrable instance for it. But it must have existed ... the whole subsequent development of the family presupposes the existence of the consanguine family as a necessary preparatory stage" (Engels, 1972 : 103). The consanguine family developed into the punaluan family. This form of the family is characterized by the exclusion of not only parents and children from sexual intercourse (consanguine family), but also sisters and brothers. This change was brought about by the increase in the significance of incest. Incest itself increased in importance as the prohibition of incest became the principle of natural selection (Morgan, 1963 : 468). For Morgan (and Engels) this increased the tempo of human development (7), without endangering female dominance (as descent could still only be proved on the mother's side). (For a discussion of incest, see Renvoize, 1982.)

The next stage of the family is the pairing family. It developed as a result of more exclusive relations within group marriages. "The man had a chief wife among his many wives (one could hardly yet speak of a favourite wife), and for her he was the most important among her husbands" (Engels, 1972 : 110). Again increased incest and jealousy played a major role in the final transition.(8) However, a man can only have a "chief wife" and be his wife's "most important

husband" if the man is the dominant partner in the relationship (not vice versa), because linguistically the power relationship was still (in Engels's formulation) one of matriarchy. It thus seems that Engels could not escape his own patriarchal attitudes, even within the theoretical framework of matriarchy.

The most important new development of the pairing family was that a child now had not only a proven natural mother, but also a proven natural father; thus proven paternity. For Engels a problem thus arose as a result of the contradiction between the form of descent and the division of labour. "Once it had passed into the private possession of families and there rapidly began to augment, this wealth dealt a severe blow to the society founded on pairing marriage and the matriarchal gens. Pairing marriage had brought a new element into the family. By the side of the natural mother of the child it placed a natural and attested father with a better warrant of paternity, probably, than that of many a father today.

"According to the division of labour within the family at that time, it was the man's part to obtain food and the instruments of labour necessary for this purpose. He therefore also owned the instruments of labour, and in the event of husband and wife separating, he took them with him, just as she retained the household goods. Therefore, according to the social custom of the time, the man was also the owner of the new source of subsistence, the cattle, and later of the new instruments of labour, the slaves. But according to the custom of the same society, his children could not inherit from him" (Engels, 1972 : 119). (9)

For Engels the man used this strengthened position to change the traditional order of inheritance. This was done in favour of his children. "This, however, was impossible as long as descent was reckoned according to mother right. Mother right, therefore, had to be overthrown, and overthrown it was" (Engels,

1972 : 119). I have already discussed the consequences of the overthrow of the mother right. Nevertheless, not only did it change the position of women, but it also resulted in the transition from the pairing family to the monogamous family.

According to Engels, monogamy is based on "the supremacy of the man, the express purpose being to produce children of undisputed paternity; such paternity is demanded because these children are later to come into their father's property as his natural heirs" (Engels, 1972 : 125). Monogamy is also seen as the beginning of civilization. An important difference between monogamy and its predecessors is that it is the first form of the family with an economic and not a natural base, because of the victory of private property (Engels, 1972 : 128). (10) (11) The most significant aspect of the monogamous family is the fact that women continued their traditional tasks of production (and reproduction), but their labour was devalued through its total isolation from the social production of surplus value (as defined in classical and contemporary marxist theory). In other words, in marxist theory, women's products and services had use value but no exchange value (see 5.4 below). (12)

1.3.3 Marriage

Although I have used the concepts "family" and "marriage" almost interchangeably in my analysis thus far, they have specific meanings to classical marxists. A distinction is also made between the bourgeois family and the proletarian family. Engels, Marx, Bebel and Gilman all distinguish between marriage and the family (see Charvet, 1982 : 83). According to them marriage in itself is not an unequal power distribution. It is the monogamous family that subordinates women to private labour (in other words, to unpaid and socially devalued labour). Furthermore, classical marxists were not opposed to (or interested in analysing) the emotional relations within marriage. They did not see these rela-

tions as power relations; rather marriage in itself was important and unproblematic. Only the economic relations within marriage are problematic to them. "The supremacy of the man in marriage is the simple consequence of his economic supremacy, and with the abolition of the latter will disappear of itself" (Engels, 1972 : 145).

The marxist slogan "abolish the family" is thus by no means (at least for classical marxists) the same as "abolish marriage". On the contrary; marriage had to be developed and made more exclusive. "Sexual love is by its nature exclusive...the marriage based on sexual love is by its nature individual marriage. If now the economic considerations...disappear...the equality of women thereby achieved will tend infinitely more to make men really monogamous than to make women polyandrous" (Engels, quoted by Lane, 1976 : 18). (13)

Since it is only the economic power relationship that is problematic in marriage, Engels and Marx deny the existence of a power relationship between the proletarian husband and wife. The reason for this is that the proletarian husband possesses no private property and can thus not use this power to dominate his wife. Furthermore, for Engels, the employment of proletarian women in factories and so on led to a basis of equality between husband and wife in marriage. This provided the foundation of true "sex- love", since the material foundation of male dominance had ceased to exist (see the discussion by Barrett, 1980 : 48). On the other hand, the bourgeois family is always based "on capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 49-50). Furthermore, for Marx and Engels, "the bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and reduced the family to a mere money relation" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 38).

The distinction that is made (by Marx and Engels) between the bourgeois and the proletarian family makes it clear that there is little concern for the specific subordination and oppression of women (see McDonough and Harrison, 1978 : 29). We can thus conclude that Engels and Marx were not attacking the family per se, but rather the exploitative form which it had taken historically until "finally", the monogamous family was founded on economic conditions.

1.3.4 The "sexual" [gender] division of labour

The division of labour is an important aspect in marxist theory. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels wrote that "the existing stage in the division of labour determines also the relations of individuals to one another with reference to the material instrument, and product of labour" (Marx and Engels, 1970 : 43-44). For Marx and Engels, division of labour refers to different spheres of labour; the social division of labour and the "sexual" [gender] division of labour. For the purpose of this study I shall concentrate on the latter.

In classical marxism the "sexual" [gender] division of labour is seen as the first division of labour. "The first division of labour is that between man and woman for the propagation of children" (Engels, 1972 : 129). Despite this, the "sexual" [gender] division of labour in itself is not considered an important social phenomenon.⁽¹⁴⁾ The reason for this is threefold. First, for Engels, "the division of labour between the two sexes is determined by quite other causes than by the position of women in society" (Engels, 1972 : 113). Consequently, the "sexual" [gender] division of labour is thus seen as unproblematic and outside the sphere of women's oppression. For this reason Engels's work does not contain any criticism of the "sexual" [gender] division of labour. Instead, his criticism is focused on the relative economic and social importance of the "sexual" [gender] division of labour within the structures of a class society which fosters a division

between private and social labour. The process within which domestic labour is privatized is thus his central concern, and not the "sexual" [gender] division of labour characterizing the process.

Second, most early marxists saw the capitalist mode of production itself as drawing women more and more into the wage labour force and in so doing destroying the "sexual" [gender] division of labour. For Marx, the despotism of the father within the home is thus replaced by the despotism of capital within the factory which is indifferent to, and destructive of, the "sexual" [gender] division of labour. "The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more modern industry becomes suspended by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 42). The inner logic of capitalism is thus assumed to be antipatriarchal. The transition from precapitalist modes of production to the capitalist mode of production is thus a transition from male dominance to the domination of the capitalist class.

Third, for Engels, the popular notion of equality in relations of production (as a means of preventing dominance and oppression) is less important than the notion of complementary relations of production. For him, the original relation between the "sexes" [genders], based on a "natural" division of labour, was not oppressive, because it was characterized by a complementary relation of independence/dependence (or, in other words, power/dependence). "They are each master in their own sphere: the man of his weapons, the hunting and fishing implements; the woman of household gear" (Engels, 1972 : 218). According to Aaby, the notion of complementary relations of production "makes much of the talk about dominance and equality superfluous for Engels" (Aaby, 1977 : 34).

Despite the usefulness of the concept (in theory and practice), it does not give an answer to the question of a hierarchical "sexual" [gender] division of labour, as even today the "sexual" [gender] division of labour is characterized by a complementary relationship between the "sexes" [genders].

Notwithstanding the fact that classical marxist theorists do not attempt a critical analysis of the "sexual" [gender] division of labour, Marx and Engels are clear about the origin of it. "There develops the division of labour which develops spontaneously or 'naturally' by virtue of natural predisposition (e.g. physical strength), needs, accidents, etc." (Marx and Engels in Eisenstein, 1979 : 13). In *The Origin of the Family* Engels argued that the "division of labour was a pure and simple outgrowth of nature; it existed only between the two sexes" (Engels in Marx and Engels, 1968 : 567). (15) However, what Engels is referring to is the division of tasks and not the division of jobs. The division of tasks centred around sexual reproduction is also present amongst other animals, but amongst them there is no division of labour since this is by definition a social concept. A basic confusion between "natural" and "social" is thus present in this "first division of labour". As Vogel remarks, "...he [Engels] regards the sex division of labour as biologically based and historically inflexible, whereas all other major phenomena in the Origin [*Origin of the Family*] have a social foundation" (Vogel, 1983 : 130).

A further problem of classical marxist writing on the "sexual"[gender] division of labour is that of a material base. "Within a family and, after further development, within a tribe, there springs up naturally a division of labour caused by differences of sex and age, and therefore based on a purely physiological foundation" (Marx, 1976 : 472). (16) Although a physiological phenomenon is social in character (and thus opposite to - in contradiction with - the questionable "natural" argument), a physiological phenomenon is nevertheless a superstruc-

tural phenomenon which cannot serve as a basis for determining the division of labour. On the contrary, the division of labour is determined by the material base and then influenced by the specific nature of the interaction of superstructural issues and phenomena, such as the family. As the division of labour is always viewed as oppressive in itself because it follows on a hierarchy in relations of production (in other words; hierarchy precedes division of labour and not vice versa), exploitation can only take place when surplus value can be appropriated by a minority group. This appropriation is itself only possible when people enter the labour market as unequals and not the other way round. "It is the law of division of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes" (Engels, quoted by Firestone, 1978 :122).

Classes emerge when the relations of production involve a differentiated division of labour, which allows for the accumulation of surplus production that can be appropriated by a minority grouping, who thus stands in an exploitative relationship to the proletariat. This exploitative relationship is in the first instance made possible by the division of labour, which then creates a division of the conditions of labour. "The division of labour implies from the outset the division of the conditions of labour, of tools and materials, and thus the splitting-up of accumulated capital among different owners, and thus, labour" (Marx, 1965 : 83). For this reason the abolition of the division of labour is central to the process of doing away with exploitation. However, the abolition of the division of labour did not (for classical marxists) include the abolition of the "sexual" [gender] division of labour, because in the sphere of the "sexual" [gender] division of labour hierarchy follows the division of labour as a secondary consequence and not vice versa. The "sexual" [gender] division of labour is thus not viewed as a reflection of the (or "an") economic base, but instead the family as a

social unit is seen as structuring the "sexual" [gender] division of labour and society in general.

In summary: the fundamental implication of the above analysis is that for Marx and Engels women are actually exploited because they are oppressed. (17) This is in contradiction with a materialist approach, which should be that women are oppressed because they are exploited. This is the only method capable of an analysis of oppression and an analysis of a possible social transformation of that very oppression. Despite the fact that the division of labour is seen as playing an important role in the general oppression of the proletariat, the "sexual" [gender] division of labour is not analysed as playing an important role in the oppression of women. For this reason the end of the oppression of women is viewed as totally different from the end of the oppression of the proletariat.

1.3.5 Patriarchy (18)

Although the concept "patriarchy" is fairly modern, different conceptions of "patriarchy" are present in classical marxism. Classical marxist writings on "patriarchy" refer to different aspects of women's oppression. These conceptions of patriarchy are often not coherent and sometimes contradict each other. These conceptions can be identified: first, "patriarchy" as a general structure of hierarchical "sexual" [gender] relations. Second, "patriarchy" as a structure within which men control women's labour and their labour-power.

Third, "patriarchy" as the structure in which men control women's reproductive capacity. Patriarchal domination is located in the sphere of reproduction (and capitalist domination in the sphere of production). "According to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character: on the one side, the production of the means of existence of food, clothing, shelter

and tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of species. The social organization under which the people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live, is determined by both kinds of labour on the one hand and of the family on the other" (Engels, 1972 : 71- 72).

However, for Engels, the relations of reproduction were not autonomous and were always determined by the relations of production. For Marx, "the individual [within the family] carries his...power...in his pocket" (Marx, 1973 : 157). Power within the family is therefore directly related to production in the sphere of exchange production, thus outside the family and outside the sphere of reproduction.

Fourth, "patriarchy" as the "symptom" of the system of division of labour into public and private spheres, with women performing in the latter. Since the former is the medium in terms of which class formations are shaped and perpetuated, women are denied direct and active participation in general socio-political life. For this reason the first condition for the "liberation" of women "...is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry..." (Engels, 1972 : 137-138).

Fifth, "patriarchy" as an inherent part of a precapitalist mode and force of production; the development of capitalism in itself will destroy "patriarchy". This would happen because of the triumph of the capitalist mode of production over the feudal mode of production. For Marx, this meant a transformation from male dominance to the domination of capital. (Marx and Engels, 1968 :42). The development of the capitalist mode of production would thus of itself undermine the material base of a male-dominated "sexual" [gender] division of labour within the family and in society. The inner logic of capitalism is therefore an-

tipatriarchal (see Balbus, 1982 : 63). For Marx and Engels, "the bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors', and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment'" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 38).

This process, within which the transformation from precapitalist modes and methods of production to capitalist modes and methods of production, is also the locus of the transformation from different forms of domination (for example, patriarchal), to the domination of capital. "Lastly, it [capitalism] dissolves the relationship between the owners of the conditions of labour and the workers into a relationship of sale and purchase, a purely financial relationship. In consequence, the process of exploitation is stripped of every patriarchal, political or even religious cloak. It remains true, of course, that the relations of production themselves create a new relation of supremacy and subordination (and this also has a political expression)" (Marx, 1976 : 1027).

Despite the inherent contradictions in classical marxist writings on patriarchy, the most important shortcoming of classical marxism is that no material analysis of the origin of the "male dominated sexual [gender] division of labour" was carried out. Most classical marxist writings on "patriarchy" are descriptive; they explain the ways in which unequal relations between men and women are manifested without explaining the material base for these (superstructural) manifestations themselves. In Hartman's words: "capitalist development creates the places for a hierarchy of workers, but traditional marxist categories cannot tell us who will fill which places. Gender and racial hierarchies determine who fill the empty places. Patriarchy is not simply a hierarchical organization, but a

hierarchy in which particular people fill particular places" (Hartmann, 1980 : 29). (19)

In summary we can say that despite the fact that more women have been drawn into the paid labour force (Engels's precondition), and despite the development of capitalism (Marx's precondition) and socialism (other marxist theorists' precondition), although gender labour relations were altered, labour is still fundamentally divided on the basis of gender, and the division of labour in itself is still hierarchical and dominated by men. It thus seems that capitalism (or socialism) does not determine the (gender)identity of labourers in societies characterized by a gender division of labour. An analysis of capitalism (or socialism) cannot explain the existence and working of patriarchy. To explain why there is a hierarchical gender division of labour dominated by men we will have to look beyond capitalism.

1.3.6 Production and reproduction

When we work with classical marxist conceptions of patriarchy, the importance of the relationship between production and reproduction within the mode of production becomes apparent. What is this relationship? To answer this question we must first gain clarity as to the classical marxist conception(s) of production and reproduction.

Whenever the conceptual problems surrounding the "production- reproduction" debate are discussed, the following passage from Engels (in *The Origin of the Family*) is used as the primary reference. "According to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character: on the one side, the production of the means of existence of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of

human species themselves, the propagation of the species. The social organization under which the people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live is determined by both kinds of labour on the one hand, and of the family on the other" (Engels, 1972 : 71- 72).

This passage is used especially as "proof" that classical marxism did (in the final instance) divide the material base of society into two spheres, that of material production and that of human reproduction and that together these two spheres determined the nature of any particular society. I think we can benefit a great deal if we read the above passage in combination with what seems to be the "original" formulation in *The German Ideology*.

"The production of life, both of one's own labour and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a double relationship: on the one hand as a natural, and on the other as a social relationship. By social we understand the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a productive force. Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence, that the 'history of humanity' must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange" (Marx and Engels, 1946 : 41).

In my discussion I first wish to clarify the conception of production in classical marxism. We can distinguish at least five different conceptions in the above quotation from Marx and Engels, namely:

- (i) "production" is always social in character;
- (ii) "production" refers to all social activities that have consequences (for example, for human survival);

- (iii) "production" is a condition of human survival;
- (iv) "production" is brought about by social interrelations which manifest themselves in the form of exchange, consumption and the division of labour;
- (v) "production" refers to those social activities that result in objects - "there are no products without production", and no production without products. If social activities do not result in objects, they are referred to by Marx (in Capital I) as "non-productive services" and even if they are paid for they do not constitute "production". The products of production can be bought and sold, and are thus commodities with exchange value.

Generally speaking, when Marx and Engels refer to "production", they refer to the process of productive labour which directly consumes products with exchange value. From the point of view of social relations, "production" in classical marxism has two distinct but interdependent aspects : (i) society's relation to nature (forces of production) in the struggle by means of which it obtains material goods, and (ii) intrasocietal relations of production. In their interaction, these two aspects form the mode of production. "Production" in itself is subject to constant development. This development is directly related to changes in production forces. For Marx and Engels, a change in the mode of production leads to a related transformation of the entire social system.

Secondly, I wish to clarify the classical marxist conception of reproduction. Within classical marxism, this clarification is only possible if we first analyse the relationship between "production" and "reproduction". "Whatever the social form of the production process, it has to be continuous, it must periodically repeat the same phases. A society can no more cease to produce than it can cease to consume. When viewed, therefore, as a connected whole and in the constant flux of its incessant renewal, every social process of production is at the same time a process of production. The conditions of production are at the same time

the conditions of reproduction. No society can go on producing, in other words, no society can reproduce, unless it constantly reconverts a part of its products into means of production, or elements of fresh products" (Marx, 1976 : 711).

For Marx, "reproduction" is thus always directly connected to "production" (no production is possible without reproduction of that very product itself). Now it is important that, if we fit "reproduction" into any one of the possible categories of production (keeping in mind the direct relation between production and reproduction for Marx), nowhere does "reproduction" have the meaning of "sex[gender]-affective production" (term used by Ann Ferguson and Nancy Folbre), or to put it differently, nowhere does it refer to gender-identified reproduction - sexuality, childbearing, childrearing, and so on.

For Marx, reproduction is "production over time", thus essentially an economic category. Since the mode of production is capitalist and not patriarchal, the mode of reproduction is thus also capitalist and not patriarchal. "The capitalist process of production, therefore, seen as a total connected process, that is, a process of reproduction, produces not only commodities, not only surplus value, but it also produces and reproduces the capitalization itself; on the one hand the capitalist, on the other the wage-labourer" (Marx, 1976 : 724).

Generally speaking, when classical marxists refer to reproduction, they refer to the process of unproductive labour which indirectly produces and indirectly consumes objects with use value only (see Marx, 1976 : 1038-1049). The concept of reproduction (in classical marxism) is thus divorced from gender and is consequently of very little use to a gender-sensitive analysis of society.

1.3.7 Class

My central concern in this section is whether classical marxists did work with a class analysis of women. In classical marxism, a class refers to a group of people sharing common positions in their relations to the means of production of a society. Classes emerge where relations of production involve a differentiated division of labour, which allows for the accumulation of surplus production that can be appropriated by a minority group.

For Marx, the class struggle originated within the process of production when in the process of production, surplus value was produced by some people and appropriated by others (Mandel in Marx, 1976 : 35). This appropriation itself made the latter the bourgeoisie and the former the proletarian class. In marxist terms, bourgeoisie and proletariat are positions of power and powerlessness respectively, according to the relation a person (within a class) has to the (economic) means of production. When men and women are categorized as classes according to their gender, the relations of production are subsumed under the relations of reproduction. This is in contradiction to a classical marxist method of analysis according to which the relations of reproduction are always subordinated and determined by the relations of production.

Women are not analysed as having a direct relation to the means of production and are thus socially not important enough to be included in an autonomous social-class analysis. As I have already pointed out, in classical marxism the products women produce inside the home have only use value but no exchange value (see 5.4 below). In other words, women do not produce surplus value within the family sphere. As this is (for classical marxists) the only sphere where women work as women (see 5.4 below), no class analysis of women as women is possible; if women work in the "sphere of production" they become part of the general class-analysis structure. For this reason women do not form a proletarian class "in itself".

Some contemporary marxists disagree with my conclusion. The following passage from Engels is used by these authors to support their view (namely that classical marxism did work with a sex-class analysis). "In an old unpublished manuscript written by Marx and myself in 1848 I find the words: 'the first division of labour is that between man and woman for the propogation of children'. And today I can add: the first class opposition that appears in history co-incides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression co- incides with that of the female sex by the male" (Engels, 1972 : 129).

However, on what the above "sex" [gender] antagonism is based is never made clear by Engels. It seems that he is connecting it with the "sexual" [gender] division of labour in the family sphere that, in other words, the "sexual" [gender] division of labour within the family enhanced the development of the antagonism between men and women. Ultimately this inter-"sex" [gender] class conflict resulted in the man representing the bourgeoisie within the family and the woman the proletariat. It thus seems that Engels is not working with a general "sex"[gender]-class analysis but using different criteria inside and outside the family to define the membership of a class. Within the family people are assigned class positions according to their gender. Outside the family (or in general) people are assigned class positions according to their relation to the means of production.

1.4 Summery of the main criticisms of the classical marxist analysis of the "woman's question" (20)

First, Engels presumes that the monogamous family would disappear among the proletariat as proletarian women were drawn into social production. He thus overlooks the ways in which a material base of male domination is constituted within the proletarian family.

Second, Engels does not regard the gender division of labour as inherently problematic. (21)

Third, no value of real significance is attached to the role of women's domestic labour in reproducing labour power itself.

Fourth, there is constant confusion between the economic base, biology (nature) and ideological kinship as providing the material base for social changes in the relationship between the genders and society. The socialist feminist critique of the classical marxist use of reproduction is summarized by Mary Mackintosh.

"One has to admit to the relation of human reproduction some autonomy of content. The characteristic relation of human reproduction is patriarchy, that is, the control of women, especially of their sexuality and fertility by men. The first necessity is to separate the fact of that control from the form in which it is exercised...what are the forms taken by patriarchy in this society, and how are they interrelated with the social relations of production? How, in other words, do changing modes of production change the forms of patriarchy without destroying its existence?" (Mackintosh, 1977 :122). Furthermore, as Mary O'Brien points out, "there is a tendency for Marx to negate the sociability and historicity of [gender] reproductive activities, to see such activities as natural and thus a-historical" (O'Brien quoted by Nicholson, 1986 : 193). All in all, classical marxists view gender reproductive activities as an apolitical sphere.

Fifth, no real class analysis of women as women is carried out. When a class analysis of women is attempted, double criteria (inside and outside the family) are used. "What is most interesting is that Engels does not use the categories of

define membership within a class. If these categories were built on like basis of power, the same units of analysis would be applicable both in and out of the family (Eisenstein, 1979 : 14).

Sixth, in general, classical marxism fails to confront the specificity of women's oppression. This is the result of their inability to place women's oppression within a framework of exploitation, thus failing to provide a material base for the oppression of women. Classical marxists fail to recognize that the patriarchal family has remained unchanged within capitalist society and that its persistence is not merely a "hangover" from a pre- industrial stage of capitalism or from a pre-capitalist society, or the result of genderist attitudes and prejudices which can be changed through argument and education (see Beechey, 1982 : 249- 250). For this reason Gayle Rubin argued that "eventually, someone will have to write a new version of the origin of the family, private property, and the state, recognizing the mutual interdependence of sexuality, economics and politics without underestimating the full significance of each human society" (Rubin, 1978 : 155). My contribution to this attempt will not be an attempt to a new theoretical synthesis between marxism and feminism, but rather an attempt to critically develop marxist/materialist theory itself.

1.5 Notes and references

1. "A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst of architects from the best of bees is this: that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement" (Marx, quoted by Lever, 1982 : 13).
2. According to Vogel (1979), "The family argument constituted the theoretical underpinning to most nineteenth century socialist considerations of the woman question. It pervades Bebel's woman under socialism, and dominates Engels' rather contradictory exposition in the *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. Within the contemporary socialist-feminist movement, the family argument often appears in the context of attempts to develop a 'theory of patriarchy'" (Vogel, 1979 : 52). Using Engels's "the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life" (Engels, 1972 : 71), these contemporary socialist-feminists suggest that while marxism explains the mode of production, the theory of patriarchy explains the mode of reproduction. According to Vogel (1979 : 53), the class struggle and the "sex" [gender] struggle are equally important in the "family argument" theory on the development of history. On the other hand, the class struggle is the central dynamic of all social development in history according to the "social-production argument".
3. A basic assumption of this study is that "gender" (man/women) is per se a social construction (see 4.3 below). This is in contrast to "sex" (male/female) that is a biological "given". However, as classical marxists did not use the term "gender" when they indeed referred to social construction which I label

"gender", I use "sex" (and "sexual" division of labour) when I specifically work with the classical marxist conception.

4. "In all forms of group family, it is uncertain who is the father of a child; but it is certain who its mother is. Though she calls all the children of the whole family her children and has a mother's duty toward them, she nevertheless knows her own children from the others. It is therefore clear that in so far as group marriage prevails, descent can only be proved on the mother's side and that therefore only the female line is recognized. And this is in fact the case among all peoples in the period of savagery or in the lower stages of barbarism. It is the second great merit of Bachofen that he was the first to make this discovery" (Engels, 1972 : 106). This "discovery" was the basis of Bachofen's mother- right theory.

5. "It is sometimes said or implied that male domination has always existed and that women have always been brutally treated by men. Contrariwise, it is also widely believed that the relations between the sexes in matriarchal society were merely the reverse of our own - with women dominating men. Neither of these propositions is borne out by the anthropological evidence" (Reed, 1978 : 110). Although this is a very "safe" conclusion, it is by no means a useless one.

6. "Here the marriage groups are separated according to generation: all the grandfathers and grandmothers within the limits of the family are all husbands and wives of one another; so are also their children, the fathers and mothers; the latter's children will form a third circle of common husbands and wives; and their children, the great-grand children of the first group, will form a fourth. In this form of marriage, therefore, only ancestors and progeny, and parents and children, are excluded from the rights and duties (as we should say) of marriage with one another. Brothers and sisters, male and female cousins of the first,

second, and more remote degrees, are all brothers and sisters of one another, and precisely for that reason they are all husbands and wives of one another" (Engels, 1972 : 102).

7. "The influence of the new practice, which brought unrelated persons into marriage relations, tended to create a more vigorous stock physically and mentally...When two advancing tribes, with strong mental and physical characters, are brought together and blended into one people by the accidents of barbarous life, the new skull and brain would widen and lengthen to the sum of the capabilities of both" (Morgan, 1963 : 468).

8. "The increasing complication of these prohibitions made group marriages more and more impossible; they were displaced by the pairing family. In this stage, one man lives with one woman, but the relationship is such that polygamy and occasional infidelity remain the right of men, even though for economic reasons polygamy is rare, while from the women the strictest fidelity is generally demanded throughout the times she lives with the man and adultery on her part is cruelly punished. The marriage tie can, however be easily dissolved by either partner; after separation, the children still belong as before to the mother alone" (Engels, 1972 : 111).

9. "The children of the dead man, however, did not belong to his gens, but to that of their mother; it was from her that they inherited, at first conjointly with her other blood-relations, later perhaps with rights of priority; they could not inherit from their father because they did not belong to his gens within which his property had to remain. When the owner of the herds died, therefore, his herds would go first to his brothers and sisters and to his sister's children, or to the issue of his mother's sisters. But his own children were disinherited" (Engels, 1972 : 119).

10. For Marx power within the family is a function of economic position rather than gender identity as the gender division of labour did not have a direct influence on the economic relations between the genders.

11. "With the patriarchal family and still more with the single monogamous family, a change came. Household management lost its public character. It no longer concerned society. It became a private service; the wife became the head servant, excluded from all participation in social production. Not until the coming of modern large-scale industry was the road to social production opened to her again - and then only to the proletarian wife. But it was opened in such a manner that, if she carries out her duties in the private service of her family, she remains excluded from public production and earn independently, she cannot carry out family duties. And the wife's position in the factory is the position of women in all branches of business, right up to medicine and law. The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife, and modern society is a mass composed of these individual families as its molecules " (Engels, 1972 : 137).

12. On the future "development" ("next stage") of the family Engels is rather vague and prefers to quote Morgan at length. "When the fact is accepted that the family has passed through four successive forms and is now in a fifth, the question at once arises whether this form can be permanent in the future. The only answer that can be given is that it must advance as society advances and change as society changes, even as it has done in the past. It is the creature of the social system, and will reflect its culture. As the monogamian family has improved greatly since the commencement of civilization, and very sensibly in modern times, it is at least supposable that it is capable of still further improvement until the equality of the sexes is attained. Should the monogamian family in the dis-

tant future fail to answer the requirements of society ...it is impossible to predict the nature of its successor" (Morgan, 1963 : 499, quoted by Engels, 1972 : 146).

In summary we can say that Morgan's "development" of the family, as well as Engels's account of it, has (even without all the inherent problems and contradictions) little more than a purely hypothetical character. According to Rose, Engels uncritically "took over the evolutionistic methods that Morgan has used. In the development of human society he regarded both production, on the one hand, and biological factors, on the other hand, as independent elements. As evidence one can cite what he wrote on the development from the consanguine family and the punaluan family to the pairing family. Engels adopted first an inherent principle of development in the evolution of the family: the progressive avoidance of incest (in fact, he wrote of a 'dark pressure to limit inbreeding'); secondly, he accepted unilinearity in the development of the family; thirdly, he accepted the investigation methods of natural science and of course biology, including the interpretation of phenomena as 'atavistic'" (Rose, quoted by Janssen-Jarreit, 1982 : 67).

13. Marx expressed himself as follows: "...the sanctification of the sexual through exclusivity, the checking of instinct by laws, the moral beauty which makes nature's commandment ideal in the form of an emotional bond, (this is) the spiritual essence of marriage" (Marx, quoted by Mitchell in Jagger and Struhl, 1978 : 137).

14. "The 'sexual' [gender] division of labour plays a particular significant role only within the characterisation of primitive communism in marxist theory" (Edholm, Harris and Young, 1977 : 117).

15. "The division of labour is purely primitive, between the sexes only" (Engels, 1972 : 218).

16. The full quotation reads as follows: "Within a family and after further development within a tribe, there springs up naturally a division of labour caused by differences of sex and age, and therefore based on a purely physiological foundation. More material for this division of labour is then provided by the expansion of the community, the increase of its population and, in particular, conflicts between the different tribes and the subjugation of one tribe by another. On the other hand, as I have already remarked, the exchange of products springs up at the points where different families, tribes or communities come into contact; for at the dawn of civilization it is not private individuals but families, tribes, etc. that meet on an independent footing. Different communities find different means of production and different means of subsistence in their natural environment. Hence their modes of production and living, as well as their products are different. It is this spontaneously developed difference which, when different communities come into contact, calls forth the mutual exchange of products and the consequent gradual conversion of those products into commodities. Exchange does not create the differences between spheres of production but it does bring the different spheres into a relation, thus converting them into more or less interdependent branches of the collective production of a whole society. In this case, the social division of labour arises from the exchange between spheres of production which are originally distinct from and independent of one another. In the other case, where physiological division of labour is the starting-point, the particular organs of a compact whole become separated from each other and break off" (Marx, 1976 : 471 - 472).

The confusion between "natural" and "social" within the social phenomenon of the "family" is clear in the following statement made by Marx. "The different

kinds of labour which create these products - such as tilling the fields, tending the cattle, spinning, weaving and making clothes - are already in their natural form social functions of the family, which just as much as a society based on commodity production, possesses its own spontaneously developed division of labour. The distribution of labour within the family and the labour-time expended by the individual members of the family, are regulated by differences of sex and age as well as by seasonal variations in the natural conditions of labour. The fact that the expenditure of the individual labour-powers is measured by duration appears here, by its very nature, as a social characteristic of labour itself, because the individual labour-powers, by their very nature, act only as instruments of the joint labour-power of the family" (Marx, 1976 : 171).

17. The use of the concepts "oppression" and "exploitation" is indeed problematic in Engels's work on women. For Eisenstein, "most of the time Engels works from the simple equation that oppression equals exploitation" (Eisenstein, 1979 : 15).

18. The meaning of the concept "patriarchy" is as problematic as the social structure it attempts to describe. For different definitions of patriarchy see Eisenstein, 1982 : 73 and Barrett, 1980 : 16; Hartmann, 1980 : 28; Mackintosh, 1977 : 122 in Kuhn and Wolpe, 1978 : 26; Balbus, 1982 : 169; and Delphy, 1984 : 140. In this study I use the concept to describe a social system characterized by a gender division of labour that is hierarchically organized in favour of men. For Delphy, "the basic reason why patriarchy was transformed from a description of society into a major concept in a theory of women's position was because feminists perceived women's oppression as a system. This perception itself flows from the first and common postulate underlying the whole of the new feminism: that women's oppression is not an individual phenomenon and not a natural phenomenon. It is political. This perception has different implications

however in different analyses. Socialist feminists do not deny that the oppression of women is part of a system, but they think the determinant of this system which oppresses women is at base the same as the one which oppresses male workers" (Delphy, 1984 : 140).

19. According to Balbus , "The marxist tradition begs precisely that question that must be answered by an adequate theory of patriarchy: how and why is the sexual difference between men and women transformed into a hierarchical opposition in which men are in the dominant and women in the subordinate position? The exploration of this question demands the examination of alternative theoretical traditions" (Balbus, 1982 : 169).

20. The following quotation from Sheila Rowbotham is an appropriate general conclusion to this section. "To take their conclusions as in any sense final would be to ignore this and to abstract them from their own source and time. Despite the depth of their historical analysis, the range of their knowledge, and the extent of the commotion their writing has helped to create, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were still a couple of bourgeois men in the nineteenth century. They saw a particular world through particular eyes. This is not to suggest that if they had happened to be women they would have had the last word on women's liberation, but that they were bound to see women's situation through the eyes of middle-class men. Inevitably this affected how they saw and where they looked" (Rowbotham, 1972 : 62).

21. The consequence of the perspective is formulated by Janssen- Jurreit. "If Marx, Engels, and Bebel had thought more seriously about the division of labour between the sexes, they would have envisaged a different division of labour. But because their androcentric perspective held fast, the unpaid and socially non- ex-

changeable services of women remain the common foundation of socialist and capitalist countries" (Janssen-Jurreit, 1982 : 169).

CHAPTER 2 : FROM CLASSICAL MARXISM TO A CONTEMPORARY MATERIALIST ANALYSIS OF THE "WOMAN QUESTION"

2.1 Problem synopsis

In this section I shall first formulate a framework of contemporary analysis specifically aimed at the "woman question". For this purpose I formulate contemporary feminist theories diagrammatically. Secondly, I shall define the fundamental issues on which classical marxism (with regard to the "woman question") is questioned today. Thirdly, I briefly address these issues in my formulation of a contemporary materialist framework that can be used to analyse the position of women as women in a contemporary patriarchal capitalist industrial society.

2.2 Feminist frameworks

(i)

Theoretical tradition	What is women's subordination called?	Why are women the subordinate sex?	Who benefits from women's subordination
Liberalism	Discrimination	Unequal opportunities	In the end perhaps nobody, except a few men
Classical marxism	Oppression	Women are excluded from social productive labour	Capitalists
Socialism	Oppression	Women form a reserve army of cheap labour used by capitalists and men	Primarily capitalists and secondarily men
"Wages for housework"	Exploitation	Women are exploited within the domestic mode of production	Capitalists and men from women's free labour
Ecological feminism	Domination	Hierarchical separation between subjects (men and masculinity) and objects (women and nature)	Elite men, but in the end we all suffer
Radical feminism	Oppression and Exploitation	The patriarchal mode of production and reproduction	Men

(ii)

Theoretical tradition	Are women a separate class?	Most important issue	Important exponents
Liberalism	No	Equal opportunities	Wollstonecraft Friedan, Mill
Classical marxism	No	Participation of women in social productive labour	Engels Marx Bebel
Socialism	"No"	Socialization of job opportunities and jobs themselves	Eisenstein Rubin Mitchell
"Wages for housework"	Yes	End of exploitation of women in the domestic mode of production	Dalla Costa James Benston
Ecological feminism	"Yes"	The overthrow of power relationships themselves	Griffin Caldecott, Leland
Radical feminism	Yes	Attack and destroy patriarchy and marriage	Firestone Daly, Bunch

2.3 Contemporary questions regarding classical marxism (1)

Today the classical marxist hypothesis on the "woman question" is questioned on the following fundamental issues (which must be addressed in a contemporary marxist/materialist hypothesis). First, the development of capitalism did not in itself destroy patriarchy. An analysis of patriarchy must thus go beyond a "capitalist-mode-of-production" argument as being the material base of patriarchy. Second, an analysis of post-socialist-revolution countries shows that patriarchy was not "destroyed" by the transition from capitalism to socialism. An analysis of patriarchy must thus go beyond any "mode-of-production" argument as being the material base of patriarchy. Third, the struggle between workers in the industrial mode of production and capitalists is not the only labour struggle and thus not the sole/unique dynamic of society (see 8.3 below).

The central problematic issue, however, remains: how and why is the sexual difference between males and females transformed into a hierarchical gender division (of men and women), in which men, because of their position of dominance, can exploit women, because of their subordinate position? The method I shall use to answer this question is a contemporary materialist analysis.

A materialist science is primarily aimed at analysing and explaining exploitation. A feminist analysis will be materialist if its basic assumptions lead it to analyse intellectual production and reproduction as the direct result of social relations of domination, oppression and exploitation. The basic assumption of this study is that in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society, women as women are exploited. In this section (2.4) I shall formulate a general framework of a possible materialist analysis to analyse my basic assumption.

2.4 Formulation of a contemporary materialist framework

(to analyse the exploitation of women as women in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal and industrial society)

Within a materialist framework, people are oppressed because they are exploited. This exploitation takes place within the mode of production and constitutes people (according to the relationship of exploitation between them) as belonging to different classes. I shall thus have to establish whether (and on what grounds) a class analysis of women as women is possible, since a class analysis is a necessary condition of a materialist analysis (see 7.2 and 7.3 below).

As a basis for my materialist feminist framework I use the distinction first made by Christine Delphy. According to her there are two modes of production which exist simultaneously in a capitalist society, an industrial mode of production and a family mode of production. The industrial mode of production is the arena of capitalist exploitation, and the family mode of production is the arena of patriarchal exploitation (Delphy, 1984 : 69). In the industrial mode of production a worker's labour is appropriated by capitalists; in the family mode of production women's labour is appropriated by men. For Delphy, the latter appropriation is made possible through the existence of the institution of marriage, which is an unique form of labour contract.

The main difference between the two modes of production is that in the industrial mode of production workers are paid (or underpaid) a wage, and the relationship between the proletariat (workers) and bourgeoisie (capitalists) is characterized by impersonal dependence. Within the family mode of production workers (women) are only maintained (not paid) and the relationship between the proletariat (women) and bourgeoisie (men) is characterized by personal dependence (see Delphy, 1984 : 186).(2) The difference between impersonal de-

pendence (capitalist exploitation) and personal dependence (slavery, marriage) is the result of maintenance instead of the payment of a wage. Furthermore, in the family mode of production consumption is not separated from production (as in the industrial mode of production). Nevertheless, both modes of production are simultaneously also modes of consumption and the circulation of goods.

In her analysis, Delphy stresses the autonomous spheres that originate in the different modes of production. She uses the analytical distinction between industrial and family modes of production to assert the independence of patriarchal exploitation from capitalist exploitation (see Burris, 1982 : 55). For Delphy, the industrial and family modes of production each occupy their own autonomous sphere [of production and reproduction] and consequently has its own system of classes.

My analysis will not focus on the independence of the two spheres (as contemporary feminists are doing) but on the interrelationship and interdependence of the two modes. Such an analysis is necessary to explain (i) the exploitation of women as women when they do work as wage workers within the industrial mode of production; (ii) the exploitation of women when they work as unwaged workers within the domestic mode of production; and (iii) patriarchy within a general social framework, analysing contemporary patriarchal capitalist industrial society holistically.

Whereas Delphy works with the industrial and family modes of production, I refer to the industrial and domestic modes, each consisting of a mode of reproduction and a mode of production. For the purpose of this study, the domestic mode is the central concern, and I refer to the industrial mode only where it is significantly linked to the gender division of labour in the domestic mode of reproduction and production.

2.5 Notes and references

1. According to Vogel we do not need a new theoretical synthesis between marxism and feminism, it is rather marxism itself that must be developed (Vogel, 1983 : 41). Beechey formulates the same idea even more strongly: "A correct analysis of the subordination of women cannot be provided by Marxists unless Marxism itself is transformed" (Beechey, 1977 : 61 in Kuhn and Wolpe, 1978 : 8).
2. The institution of marriage is of central concern to Delphy. In my analysis this institution is only an example of the general relations of exploitation that exist between men and women. Only this approach can explain the phenomenon of unmarried women not escaping their subordinate gender role in the division of labour and in social relations in general.

CHAPTER 3

VARIABLES AFFECTING THE INTER-ACTION OF GENDER AND LABOUR

3.1 Problem synopsis

The interaction of gender and labour takes place within a specific socio-political milieu which has an important influence on the interaction and its particular form. I propose to analyse the influence^{of} the following variables on the interaction of gender and labour and their importance.

First, what are the internal dynamics of contemporary industrial society?

Second, what is capitalism and what is the relationship/ interrelationship of capitalism and patriarchy? Third, what is power and what is authority; how do they interact, how do they influence the social dynamics of a society, and how does one acquire power and authority in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society?

3.2 Society

The question "What a is society?" is not a linguistic exercise but an important conceptual clarification which in itself forms part of the specific political framework within which a specific political discourse takes place (see Connely, 1983 : 153-161). To answer the question "What is a society?" we have to identify the internal dynamics of a contemporary industrial society.

A society is a social ecosystem of interacting human beings. Despite the differences between societies, all contemporary industrial societies share underlying structural features. In an attempt to understand the working of the social ecosystem, we must examine these common structural features.

First, a contemporary industrial society has a mode of production (see 8.2 below). The system of production is constituted by the manner in which humans (through their labour) obtain, use and produce resources (Leftwich, 1983 : 14) necessary for the biological and social upkeep of the society. In different kinds of societies (for example, hunting, gathering, subsistence agricultural, industrial) the modes of production are different, but despite the differences, the basic phenomena central to all systems of production are labour and knowledge/skill.

Labour (for our purpose) is characterized by various forms of division of labour and knowledge/skill as well as by the ability/opportunity to apply technology. The specific relationship between the mode of reproduction and production in the domestic mode and the mode of production and reproduction in the industrial mode will be determined in later chapters.

Second, each society has a mode of reproduction. The specific nature of the mode of reproduction in both the domestic and industrial modes, as well as the interaction between the two modes, will be examined in Chapter 4, (since this will only be possible after I have redefined the mode of reproduction).

Third, every society has a system of exchange (or system of distribution and redistribution). This system primarily refers to the ownership and control of resources (see 3.4 below).

Fourth, the single most important human activity within the social ecosystem is creative labour. Without creative labour social systems of production, reproduction and exchange cannot exist (see 5.2 below). For the purposes of this study, the single most important phenomenon within the labour process is exploitation. For Giddens, "...to trace the lines of exploitation in a society is to discover the key to the understanding of social relations of superordination and subordination

which apply within that society" (Giddens, 1974 : 29). If we thus define the concept of the "politics of a society" we inevitably define the "politics of exploitation" of that specific society.

Politics is not only about the relations between humans within the systems of production, reproduction and exchange but especially about the relations between the different systems which constitute a society. To understand the inter-relationship between the different systems is to understand the politics of the specific society. This understanding is essential when attempting to explain why a specific society is structured in a particular way (for example, why is our society characterised by a hierarchical gender division of labour).

In this study I use the concept "politics" as referring to all those human activities that are not dependent on the individual as an individual, but on the individual as existing in a specific socio-political milieu which in itself determines the specific form the individual's activities will take (see my general problem synopsis). These activities (of co-operation and conflict) are in themselves the method through which human beings obtain, use, produce and distribute resources in the process of production and reproduction of both social and biological life (Leftwich, 1983 : 11). Defined in this way, politics refers to all human interaction. Central to these activities is the struggle for the ability to control them within the process of human interaction. This struggle can be labelled the "power struggle".

Between politics and power there is a reciprocal, dependent relationship; without one the existence of the other is impossible. The existence of power within the process of human interaction itself makes exploitation possible. For this reason it is important that we examine the concept in more detail. As the mode of industrial production and reproduction is an important variable influencing the

specific form of power relations in a contemporary patriarchal industrial society, I shall first examine the capitalist mode of production (in so far as it is relevant to this study).

3.3 Capitalism

In Chapter 1, I have briefly worked with the relationship/ interaction of capitalism and patriarchy (see 1.3.5 above) in terms of classical marxism. My own analysis of this relationship/ interrelationship is formulated in Chapters 4 and 5. (1) For the purposes of this chapter, in which I analyse some variables affecting the interaction of gender and labour, I need, however, to describe the internal dynamics of capitalism, in so far as they influence the general social structure of a society.

In classical marxist terminology, capitalism is a social system characterized by the ownership of the means of production by private people (capitalists) which results in the formation of two antagonistic social classes; the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Because the bourgeoisie have the means (ownership of the means of production) to appropriate some of the labour (in the form of surplus value) produced by the proletariat, the latter are exploited by the former. This exploitation leads to a continuous class struggle, an unemployed reserve army of workers and the increasing immiseration of the proletariat.

According to Marx, the capitalist mode of production is characterized by contradictions. For him, one of the most basic contradictions inherent in capitalism is that the proletariat and wealth are opposites, and as such they form a single whole. They are both created by private property. Since private property (as wealth) is compelled to maintain itself, it is also compelled to maintain its opposite, the proletariat. Capitalism is (for Marx) an all-embracing social system. Although this idea is basically true for all "modes of production", no other

"mode of production" which directly preceded capitalism socialized people to be so dependent upon it for their own social existence. For Hildeerding, "capitalism makes the existence of the individual dependent upon the social relationships in which he is placed" (Hildeerding, 1978 : 89).

The "social dependence" of the individual on the social structure of the capitalist mode for its own social existence does not only mean that in a capitalist society the distinction between the personal and the social sphere is in itself destroyed (in favour of the latter always determining the former) but also that the individual as a social being is primarily determined by the capitalist "mode of production".(2) It is precisely this issue that I find problematic and will address in Chapter 4. A further problem that I have with the classical marxist formulation of capitalism is that in the capitalist mode of production only wage workers can be exploited. For this reason women (as a gender category) could not be exploited while they were unwaged. In other words, they could then only be subordinated. The woman question is thus a superstructural issue par excellence. I shall address this problem in Chapter 5.

3.4 Power

"Who whom?" Lenin

Social scientists usually work with one of two opposing notions of power, voluntaristic or structural. Since I envisage all human interaction as political interaction (human beings are social beings and their actions are socially structured - see my general problem synopsis) with a material base, I do not work with a voluntaristic notion of power. This is not to say that I work with a "traditional" structural notion of power according to which people within certain structures (political, economic, ideological, etc.) are powerful because of their position of dominance in the hierarchy of these structures.

I work with power as class power (see 7.2) within the process of interaction of the structures of the different modes in society: in other words, in the process of interaction between the modes of production, reproduction and exchange (see 3.2 above) in both the domestic and industrial modes (and in their interaction). I shall determine the nature of the specific interaction between these structures vis-a-vis the domestic and industrial modes in Chapter 7.

The most general meaning of the concept "power" is simply "ability". Both the French -"pouvoir" - and the Latin -"potestas"- terms for power are derived from the verb "to be able" - "pouvoir" and "posse" respectively. The consequence of defining power as ability is that the concepts "power", "authority", "domination" and "force" are often used interchangeably. It is thus important to distinguish between these concepts as well as to determine how they interact within the social dynamics of a contemporary, capitalist, patriarchal, industrial society.(3)

The single most important phenomenon distinguishing political authority from de facto power is consent.(4) Many social scientists use a working definition of authority as being a "recognized" and "legitimate" right to control the behaviour of others. "People do what he (who possesses authority) tells them without asking questions" (Weldon, 1953 : 50). Authority is thus seen as the ability to compel obedience without this ability being fundamentally questioned, because it is assumed by all parties involved in the specific process of human interaction that this ability is legitimate in itself.

The main problem I have with defining authority in the above way is that it is confined to be a voluntaristic kind of power. Consequently, authority becomes a phenomenon in itself which is possessed and has no direct relation to the basic social system (and the social structure) and thus to a material base. In mainstream marxist theory it is difficult to separate conceptually the concepts of

"power" and "authority", since both are seen as consequences of people's participation in the subsistence economy. This conceptual fusion is problematic on two counts.

First, in many societies women's contribution to subsistence exceeds men's contribution. Despite this, these societies (as opposed to societies where men's contribution to subsistence are interpreted as exceeding women's contribution) are not per se matriarchal societies. Secondly, anthropological research has shown that at a certain point the economic contribution made by women does not increase their de facto power, but reduces it (Sanday, 1974 : 199; also see Sanday, 1981; Brown, 1975; Mead, 1950). These authors, however, fail to supply a materialist explanation for their analyses as they do not work with materialist class analysis of gender relations. Marxists, on the other hand, fail because they do not work with gender class analysis.

In an attempt to overcome these shortcomings, I shall first examine the possibility of supplying authority (in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society) with a material base. In this regard the work of Shils on power is important for my attempt to locate the position of authority within the social system. Secondly, I shall analyse the possibility of incorporating the influence of gender (in itself) in my analysis of authority and power.

According to Shils, the major mechanisms of the ordering or concerting of actions are: (i) exchange; (ii) common interest; (iii) solidarity or consensus (arising from mutual affection, primordial community, community/belief and civil community); and (iv) power, which can take on the forms of influence, authority and coercive control (Shils in Mitchell, 1968 : 12). Influence, authority and coercive control are thus certain forms of power without being power itself.

Power, on the other hand, is not a phenomenon in itself, but rather an action that occurs when a "form" of power (influence, authority or coercive action) is active in the process of human interaction. For Shils, "the order or the articulation of the actions of a plurality of actors by power occurs when the pattern of the actions to be performed, issues from an actor other than those whose actions are to be articulated" (Shils in Mitchell, 1968 : 12). Power is thus not a phenomenon in itself but a relation which is constituted by the different forms of power.

Influence, authority and coercive control all play different parts in the process of power struggle. Influence is the specific form of power which entails the provision of patterns through the presentation of concrete exemplary actions. Coercive control operates through commands believed to be enforceable by negative sanctions. Authority, on the other hand is "that form of power which orders or articulates the actions of other actors through commands which are effective because those who are commanded regard the commands as legitimate" (Shils in Mitchell, 1968 : 13). Authority differs from coercive control in that the latter elicits conformity through its capacity to reward or punish both materially and directly. The rewards and punishment of authority, on the other hand are symbolic and indirect.

In using Shils's basic conceptual distinctions between the different forms of power, we do not end up with authority as a voluntaristic kind of power, but as a form of power which is determined by social relationships. Authority is thus a socially structured relationship. Since this study works with the assumption that socially structured relations always have a material base, authority (as a socially constructed relationship) thus has a material base. In determining the material base of authority in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal society, I shall attempt to formulate a structural framework within which the phenomenon of "gender"

can be incorporated. For this purpose I need to establish the interrelationship between "gender" and "authority".

In *Women, Culture and Society* (1974), Michelle Rosaldo argues that the opposition between "domestic" and "public" provides the basis of a structural framework within which the biological distinction between males and females is transformed into psychological, cultural, social and economic distinctions (Rosaldo, 1974 : 23). The domestic sphere centres on mothering and reproduction (social and biological), while the public sphere is characterized by human relations which do not revolve around mothering and reproduction. According to Rosaldo and Lamphere, it is the emphasis that is placed on women's maternal role that leads to the above "universal" opposition, which is "necessarily asymmetrical" (Rosaldo and Lamphere, 1974 : 8).

The distinction made by Rosaldo (between the public and domestic spheres and the location of mothering in the latter) is used by Karen Sacks (1974) to analyse the characteristics of the social structures and the social relations within the different spheres. According to Sacks domestic work is not considered "real" work since it has only private use value and no exchange value, unlike the labour performed in the public sphere (see 5.4 below). Sacks's proposed solution to gender inequality is that the distinction between the two spheres must in itself be abolished. Since use values have no exchange value, it has little material importance within the structures of capitalism. For this reason Sacks's analysis centres on the transformation of capitalism to socialism.

This precondition is, however, in itself not sufficient to destroy patriarchy (see 1.4 above) as it ignores the reality that most use values are produced by women in the domestic mode within the structure of mothering (see 5.5 below). The problematic character of the distinction made between use values and exchange

values (and its influence on the social structure - see 5.4 below) is, however, a key issue to be analysed in more depth. To achieve this I shall incorporate Yael Azman's (1981) analysis of authority into my analysis.

For Azman, it is not only the production of use values by women in the domestic sphere that is an important phenomenon (in the process of unequal access to authority and political power) but also the production of non material ("cultural") values by women in the domestic sphere (Azman, 1981 : 547-559). Use values and nonmaterial values cannot be exchanged and thus cannot be accumulated. This is in contrast with the social dynamics of the public sphere in which both use values and nonmaterial values can be subjected to exchange relationships. This possibility of an exchange relationship itself creates the positions of authority and political power. For Azman it is thus "the delimitation of women's activity to the domestic sphere, and the constraints on the transformation of the nonmaterial and material values created by them to the public sphere,...[that] bar their equal access to political positions" (Azman, 1981 : 553).

The constraints on the transformation of values produced by women in the domestic sphere into the public sphere are the following: first, the non-exchangeable nature of a great proportion of the values (both nonmaterial and material) created in the domestic sphere. This state of affairs is the result of the reality that these values have a direct, specific and unique value to specific people only. Secondly, the existence of gatekeepers in the process of converting values, produced in the domestic sphere, into political positions. Thirdly, the stereotyping mechanism in terms of which women are rewarded not individually, but according to their fusion with dominant cultural values as mothers and wives (Azman, 1981 : 552-558). The consequences of this control mechanism are that it hinders accumulation of resources by women in the domestic sphere and im-

pedes women's opportunities to convert resources into political positions (Azman, 1981 : 558).

Within this framework, Azman defines authority as "a recognized and legitimate right to control the behaviour of others" (Azman, 1981 : 548) and power as "a control of [the] behaviour of others established by means of manipulating resources" (Azman, 1981 : 548). We need, however, to enlarge the scope of this analysis.

Not only are women the primary producers of use values and nonmaterial values, but this production in itself is seen as the *raison d'être* and thus the "symbolic task" of women. Consequently it is rewarded by symbolic values - "good-mother/good- wife", and punished by symbolic values - "neglecting-her-children/husband". When women do, through participation in the public labour force, gain access to "actual" power, they do not necessarily become dominant, in other words gain access to real (*de facto*) power.

Brown (1975) worked in the Iroquois American Indian tribe. According to her, women in this tribe have established a large degree of "actual" (in Azman's terms) power through their control of the process of production. Despite the reality that women have more "actual" power than men, men are nevertheless the politically dominant group; in other words, the power structure of the tribe is patriarchal. The recognition of actual power as real power is only possible if people have both "actual" power and the symbolic right to politically utilize this "actual" power. If someone has both authority and actual power, only then does such a person have real (*de facto*) power.

In conclusion; authority is a recognized, legitimate and symbolic right to control the behaviour of others. It is also a necessary precondition for the utilization of

actual power as real power; in other words, as political domination. As this right is symbolic, it can be possessed (as opposed to actual power) and it can also be ascribed to a group or a class (such as a gender group/class - see 7.3 below). Authority can consequently be analysed as the structural framework within which power relations function.

Actual power is the control of the behaviour of others established by means of controlling and manipulating resources. The amount of real power that an individual has will increase if that person increases his/her actual power. Together, authority and actual power form real power, which then inevitably leads to a social system of political domination and consequently to the control of the "real" political and symbolic value system.

Structures of domination (such as patriarchy) consist of "asymmetries of resources" (Giddens, 1979 : 93), which are essential in sustaining the specific political power relations. In sustaining the dominant political power relations of a patriarchal society, authority - as a resource and structural framework of power relations - is thus linked to system of gender, and (within a materialist paradigm) to the system of labour relations and labour divisions. In the next two chapters I shall examine these links in more detail.

3.5 Notes and references

1. The interrelationship between patriarchy and capitalism poses a number of important questions to marxist theory itself. For Young "It is fairly commonplace to hear the argument that the development of capitalism has brought a worsening of the position of women, whether in the advanced capitalist countries or those of the so- called third world. At the same time, the apparent counter- argument, that only the capitalist mode of production has produced the necessary conditions for the liberation of women, is equally staunchly upheld. The two positions may not be as mutually exclusive as they seem, for it is possible to argue that it is precisely in the contradiction between the worsening conditions brought about by the development of class society, and the high level of development of the productive forces, which makes it technically possible for women to be freed from individual servicing and reproductive roles, that the potential for liberation lies. The changes now taking place in the third world provide a unique opportunity to investigate both the forces underlying the development of class society and the specific ways in which conditions do (or do not) worsen for women" (Young, 1978 : 125).

2. This relationship between the "personal" and the "social" (within capitalism) is formulated in these words by Marx and Engels: "To be a capitalist, is to have not only a purely personal, but a social status in production. Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion. Capital is, therefore, not a personal, it is a social power" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 47). For this reason they argued that "when, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social

character of the property that is changed. It loses its class-character" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 47).

3. For Arendt it is a rather sad reflection of the present state of political science that our terminology does not distinguish among such "key words as 'power', 'strength', 'force', 'authority', and, finally, 'violence' - all of which refer to distinct different phenomena" (Arendt, 1986 : 142). To me this is not a problem of terminology, conception or logical grammar, but rather one of historical social values that social scientists carry with them into their science. For this reason, to distinguish between these different concepts is in itself a social act.

4. Consent, or recognition of the power of the subject is given by the object in the power relationship. In contrast, when power is the result of the intended action of the subject, then we work with de facto power. This notion of power is prominent in Hobbes, Weber and Dahl. Power, for these authors, is the capacity of individuals to achieve intended outcomes. On the other hand, authors such as Marx, Arendt and Poulantzas work with power as class power, in other words, as a "property of...[a] social community, a medium whereby common interests or class interests are realised" (Giddens, 1979 : 89). Although I do make the distinction between consent and de facto power, I do not work with the voluntaristic notion of this distinction, found in Hobbes, Weber, Dahl and such thinkers.

CHAPTER 4

GENDER

4.1 Problem synopsis

The purpose of this chapter is to answer three questions. First, what is the difference between "sex" and "gender"? Second, how is gender created? Third, what is the influence of the socio-political milieu on gender creation and vice versa? In an attempt to answer these questions, I shall work within the following framework, first clarifying the difference between "sex" and "gender", then attempting a synopsis of theories on gender creation and finally dealing with the system of reproduction. In dealing with reproduction I shall start by analysing the social system of mother monopolized childrearing and then examine the family as the unit within which reproduction takes place.

4.2 Introduction

"What is a negro slave? A man of the black race. The one explanation is as good as the other. A negro is a negro. He only becomes a slave in certain relations. A cotton spinning-jenny is a machine for spinning cotton. It thus becomes capital only in certain relations. Torn from these relations it is no more capital than gold in itself is money or sugar is the price of sugar" (Marx, 1971 : 28). Gayle Rubin rephrases Marx to read: "What is a domesticated woman? A female of the species. The one explanation is as good as the other. A woman is a woman. She only becomes a domestic, a housewife, a chattel, a playboy bunny, a prostitute or a human dictaphone in certain relations. Torn from these relations she is no more the helpmate of man than gold in itself is money and so on" (Rubin, 1975 : 158).

In this chapter, my basic assumption is that there is nothing intrinsically problematic about sex but that within certain relations sex distinctions are transformed into gender and class distinctions, which inevitably lead to exploitation within the process of the division of labour (which will be the central concern of Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

4.3 Sex and gender - a clarification

In the past the term "sex" was used to refer to both female/male and feminine/masculine distinctions. Today many theorists do make a distinction between sex - the biological components of the female/male distinction - and gender - the social, psychological and cultural aspects of the feminine/masculine distinction. (1) The fundamental difference between the two components is thus recognized. Nevertheless, the latter (gender) is mostly viewed as primarily a direct consequence of the former (sex). The sex/gender distinction thus becomes merely technical. I shall therefore not work with the distinction between sex and gender itself (as it is not problematic), but rather with the question, "Does sexual identity inevitably lead to gender identity?"

4.3.1 Chromosomes

The basic genetic coding in human beings is carried on twenty three pairs of chromosomes. All cells, except the reproductive cells, contain forty-six chromosomes. The reproductive cells contain half the necessary genetic material, in other words, twenty three chromosomes. The chromosomes of the twenty-third pair are known as the sex chromosomes, because they determine what type of reproductive cell the individual will produce. When the twenty-third chromosome of the sperm cell successfully penetrates the twenty-third chromosome of the egg cell, the twenty three chromosomes from each reproductive cell pair to form the nucleus of the cell which will develop into the fetus.

The result is almost always one of two possible combinations for the twenty third pair - either XX (female) or XY (male).

A number of chromosome variations are known, and may occur as a result of sex chromosome abnormalities. Some people have only one chromosome, while others have more than two. Evidence indicates that these people nevertheless develop typical gender identities despite the chromosomal abnormalities. According to Money and Ehrhardt (1972), people with sex chromosome abnormalities develop the gender assigned to them at birth. The phenomenon of transsexualism, which involves chromosomes and gender identity, is another example of a chromosome variation. A male-to-female transsexual, for example, has XY chromosomes, but a "normal" feminine gender identity (Kessler and McKenna, 1978 : 50).

4.3.2 Gonads

The absence of gonads and internal reproductive structures (such as an uterus or sperm ducts) may sometimes only be discovered when the signs of puberty fail to appear. By this time, however, the person has already developed a specific (stable) gender identity (Kessler and McKenna, 1978 : 56). Money and Ehrhardt (1972) also pointed out that there is no evidence that the gender identity of people is influenced by the absence of internal reproductive structures. It is thus possible that people can (and do) develop a gender identity in conflict with the biological sex of their internal reproductive organs. The same is true for external reproductive organs.

4.3.3 Hormones

In "normal" childhood, sex hormones in both male - androgen - and female - estrogen - are virtually non-existent until the child is about ten years old. Both

males and females then undergo a drastic increase in androgen, while estrogen increases in females only. This results in males having a high level of androgen and a low level of estrogen, while females will have a moderate level of androgen and a high level of estrogen. However, at the point where this drastic change occurs, the gender identity of the child has already been stabilized. Gender identity can thus not be a result of the influence of hormones as such.

People with complete androgen insensitivity also cause us to question the link between sex and gender. In such cases the body cells are genetically unable to respond to androgens. At birth these people have normal female genitals and at puberty enough estrogen is produced for the further development of the female body. The condition is only discovered as a result of failure to menstruate. Someone with an androgen insensitivity develops a "normal" feminine gender identity.

4.3.4 The "animal/natural" argument

For the many social scientists, there is a direct link between so called "sex differences" or "sex roles" in human beings and in other animals. For this reason these ("sex") differences are viewed as natural and thus per se good, or "the way things should be". This argument, and the assumptions on which it is based, I find problematic for several reasons.

First, "sex differences" in other animals are usually studied because it is assumed that sex differences in animals reflect pure biology without the interference of socialization. But, as many studies have pointed out (see Rosenberg, 1973 : 374-391 and Rohrbaugh, 1981 : 13-21); despite being different compared to human socialization, animals are not "unsocialized" since they do have coherent systems of social organization.

Second, the "animal/natural" argument ignores the ability to learn (see my first argument above) and the importance thereof (see Oakley, 1982 : 61). The basis of all survival is evolution and thus transformation. One of the most effective ways to achieve this (physical and social evolution through transformation) is through learning, and learning is by no means an unnatural process. Weisstein (1971) in Rohrbaugh (1981) pointed out that the assumption that anything animals do is natural and thus per se desirable and vice versa seems clearly absurd. This would, for example, imply that humans should not learn to read or write since animals do not (or cannot) do so, and consequently reading or writing would be unnatural.

Third, the "animal/natural" argument about "sex" and "sex roles" being natural is problematic, even within the "natural unsocialized animal world". "Every conceivable type of social organization and sex difference has been found, from the male marmoset who does most of the child care, and the female lion who does most of the hunting and killing, to the female baboon who does the child care while the male does the fighting and food gathering Thus even in non-humans, the fact that a female gives birth does not necessarily mean that she cares for the infant, much less spends all her time on this nurturant function" (Rohrbaugh, 1981 : 14).

Fourth, as Ardener (1978), Williams (1975) and Oakley (1982) have pointed out, biology is not a "given" or a cultural constant. All cultures and social groups perceive the biological body, its functions and "natural" divisions in different ways. For Oakley the nature versus nurture debate is thus outmoded because "nurture affects [and socially determines] nature" (Oakley, 1982 : 61). (2)

4.4 Theories of gender creation

The three most prominent mainstream theories of gender creation are; freudian psychoanalytic, social learning and cognitive developmental.

4.4.1 Freudian psychoanalytic theory

"In conformity with its peculiar nature, psychoanalysis does not try to describe what a women is - that would be the task it could scarcely perform - but sets about enquiring how she comes into being, how a women develops out of a child with bisexual disposition" (Freud, 1978 : 74).

Freud took the formation of sexual identity as his central problem. He attempted to transform the biological theory of instincts into the notion of human needs and to place these human needs within the person's history of subjectivity (Mitchell, 1974 : 27). Thus in Freud the idea of preadaptation to reality is humanized. The central phenomenon in this transformation into human reality is the unconscious. For Freud one is one's unconscious; the unconscious is the person's sexuality, and this is formed in early childhood. (3) (4) For this reason, a human being is "the sole being at the mercy of his childhood" (Freud, quoted by Balbus, 1982 : 173). (5) Human life is thus inherently conservative - the past always dominates the present. Because one is one's sexuality, Freud's study of the unconscious is nothing more (or less) than the study of the formation of sexual identity.

Freud was convinced that the human infant is at first bisexual (not asexual) and that the difference between the sexes does not (really) emerge until puberty. This transformation process takes place with the shift from the pleasure-principle (by which all new born infants are dominated and which entails the infant striving only for pleasure) to the reality-principle (where constant nonsatisfaction of the pleasure-principle is replaced by the recognition of what is real, thus what is real

deprivation). For Freud the pleasure-principle remains only in fantasy, a means of transforming reality in an attempt to escape from that very reality.

In the preoedipal phase there is no important distinction between the sexes. But the oedipal phase is so different for the two sexes that it not only establishes changes within the biological category itself, but also fundamentally changes the relationship between the sexes. The oedipus complex is vastly more important for a boy, but more problematic for a girl. For Freud the major oedipal task is preparation for heterosexual adult relationships. Thus, a girl must change her love object from her mother to her father (in freudian terms), her libidinal mode from active to passive and her libidinal organ and eroticism from clitoris to vagina. (6) The way for the clitoral-vaginal transference is prepared by "penis envy", which, for Freud, is crucial to the development of normal femininity. (7)

"During the phase of the normal oedipus complex we find the child tenderly attached to the parent of the opposite sex, while its relation to the parent of its own sex is predominantly hostile. In the case of a boy there is no difficulty in explaining this. His first love-object was his mother. She remains so; and, with strengthening of his erotic desires and his deeper insight into the relations between his father and mother, the former is bound to become his rival" (Freud, 1977 : 371).

The oedipus attitude in little boys belongs to the phallic phase and its destruction is brought about by fear of castration; in other words, by the "narcissistic interest in their genitals" (Freud, 1977 : 333). The castration complex ends the boy's oedipus complex and therewith his infancy. Identification with his former rival (father) is thus the way out of the oedipal impasse that confronts the male child. For the little girl, this process is completely different as her first object was also her mother, but she must now "find her way to her father". For Freud, this trans-

formation is the central problem in the development of the oedipus complex in girls (Freud, 1977 : 371).

"In girls the oedipus complex is a secondary formation. The operations of the castration complex precede it and prepare for it. As regards the relation between the oedipus and castration complexes there is a fundamental contrast between the two sexes. Whereas in boys the oedipus complex is destroyed by the castration complex, in girls it is made possible and led up if we reflect that the castration complex always operates in the sense implied in its subject-matter: it inhibits and limits masculinity and encourages femininity.

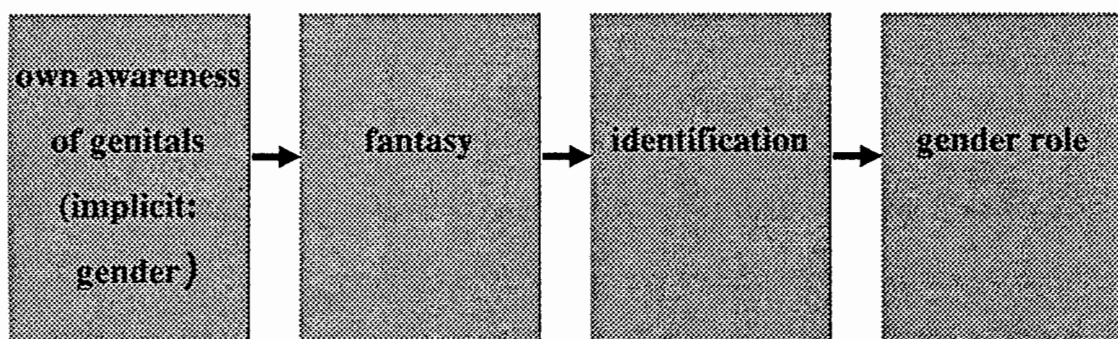
"The difference between the sexual development of males and females at the stage we have been considering is an intelligible consequence of the anatomical distinction between their genitals and of the psychological situation involved in it; it corresponds to the difference between a castration that has been carried out and one that has merely been threatened. In their essentials, therefore, our findings are self-evident and it should have been possible to foresee them" (Freud, 1977 : 341).

The different reactions of girls (as a result of their different psychological situation) to the idea of castration is, for Freud, the distinguishing moment between the sexes. The discovery that she is castrated is a turning-point in a girl's development; "she acknowledges the fact of her castration, and with it, too, the superiority of the male and her own inferiority" (Freud, 1977 : 376). Furthermore, the girl's reaction to the castration complex creates three possible lines of development. One leads to sexual inhibition or the neuroses, the second to change of character according to the masculinity complex (fantasy of being a man which can result in a "homosexual choice of object") and the third to normal femininity ("in which she takes her father as her object and so finds her way to the feminine

form of the oedipus complex" - Freud, 1977 : 366). The girl remains in the oedipus period for an undetermined time, and only later demolishes it and even so never completely.

The "feminine form of the oedipus complex" is completed when the little girl gives up her wish for a penis and replaces it with a wish for a child. (8) When she does so, not only does her father become her love-object but her mother consequently becomes the object of her jealousy: "The girl has turned into a little woman" (Freud, 1977 : 340). This process of "becoming a woman" is related to the replacement of one wish by another and psychologically that women now desire not what has been taken away from them (by their mothers) but instead come to desire that which they do not have and which must be given to them (by their fathers). Furthermore we can say that, according to freudian theory, the baby-wish is the conscious expression of a repressed unconscious penis-wish. For this reason, freudian theory states that only the birth of a male child can give a woman what she really wants (that is, a penis).

We can summarize the essence of Freud's psychoanalytic theory diagrammatically as follows:



(Kessler and McKenna, 1978 : 88)

Criticism of the freudian paradigm

Freud's basic assumption is that people are born with one of two possible anatomies. For this reason he never worked with the concept of gender (that is with my conception of gender). Instead, his work focuses on "some psychological consequences of the anatomical distinctions between the sexes". For Freud there was no question that the psychological and behavioural differences he worked with existed "naturally". He was concerned only with the manifestation and operation of these (given) differences. Central to this process was children's awareness that they either possess or do not possess a penis and the consequences of this awareness. The general problems that I have with freudian theory are the following.

First, the fundamental problem with Freud's approach (as far as gender is concerned) is the inevitable fusion/equation between sex and/or with gender, or, formulated differently, between genital awareness and/or with sexual and thus finally (according to his paradigm) gender identity. Although Freud correctly stated that we must not confuse the sexual with the genital, he himself interprets almost all infant behaviour as sexual, in other words, as satisfying a sexual drive. Against his own pleasure-principle he argues that the rhythmical nature of activities such as thumbsucking proves their sexual nature since the child ~~needs~~to have such sensations repeated (see Freud; 1977 : 95-102).

Second, for Freud the subordination of women is a given when they (as young girls) realize what they lack (a penis). But surely if the boy sees the girl as castrated and therefore as inferior by nature (and recognized by men as such), then men have no need to hate them (see 4.7 below). I suggest that we turn Freud upside down: the boy's identification with the father (for Freud the former rival) at the end of the oedipus period may not result from of a narcissistic inter-

est in the superior genitals the boy fears to lose (as result of the threat of castration), but rather exist because the powerless boy (being totally separate from the mother - in contrast with the girl) has no other option than to overcome the absolute power of the mother (as a result of mother-monopolized childrearing).

In other words, it is not to protect his superior genitals, but rather to protect his inferior (in relation to the powerful mother) position overall that the boy turns to the father. The "smashing" of the oedipus complex in boys may thus not be the result of pride (in genitals), but of fear, not for genitals but for personality insecurity - powerlessness. On the other hand, Jeanne Lampl de Groot has concluded that the preoedipal mother-daughter relationship is characterized by a "negative" oedipus complex. In other words; girls experience their fathers as rivals (Lampl de Groot, 1932 : 498-499).

Third, a major problem in criticizing the freudian paradigm from a materialist paradigm is that the latter attempts to explain "knowing" by "being" and not vice versa. In explaining "being" by "knowing", as the freudian paradigm does, people become abstract identities living in a social and political vacuum. (9) Because such a paradigm (furthermore) does not deal critically with oppression per se, it inevitably takes on a positive character. This in turn makes it possible to explain "being" by "knowing" with the incorporation into your "knowing" of your own values and so on (already a result of "knowing" by "being"). For this reason it becomes obvious why Freud could not escape his own patriarchal values. It is a given (in terms of his paradigm) that the boy had to be the norm and the girl the deviation from it - his paradigm left no other option. If we thus criticize Freud for his "anatomy is destiny" undertones and the assumptions that psychosocial distinctions in the final analysis rest on biological differences, we are in a way stating the inevitable in terms of his social- science framework.

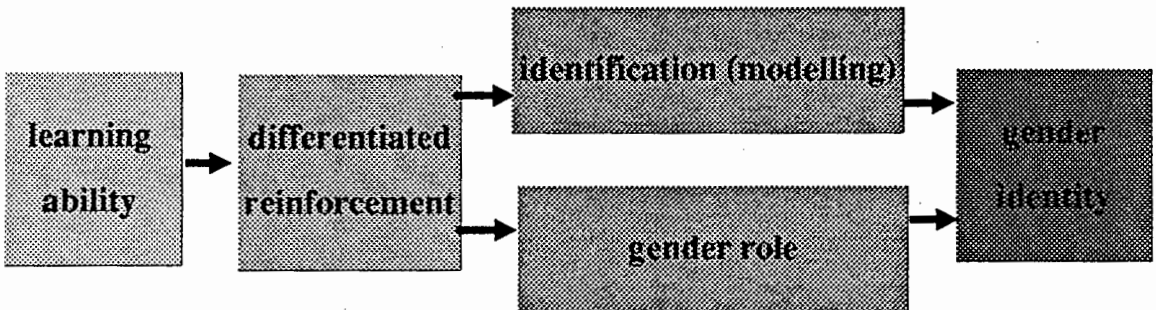
4.4.2 Social learning theory

During the 1940s and 1950s social learning theory developed in reaction to some of the problems of Freudian theory (in relation to gender creation). According to Mischel the acquisition of gender-typed behaviours can be described by the same learning principles used to analyse any other aspect of an individual's behaviour (Mischel, 1966 : 59). Gender-typed behaviour is thus seen as behaviour directly linked with and dependent on the gender of the person exhibiting the behaviour. For Mischel the learning principles are "discrimination, generalization ... observational learning...the pattern of reward, non-reward and punishment under specific contingencies, [and] the principles of direct and various conditioning" (Mischel, 1966 : 57).

Whereas Freudian theory is based on inferent intrapsychic processes (oedipal fantasy, etc.), social learning theory focuses on observable antecedent events. Gender behaviour is learned from all people who have control over rewards (thus power) without the need of enforcing gender behaviour.

The reinforcement of gender identity takes place when the child first learns the label "boy/girl" or "man/woman" appropriate to the behaviour of an individual. The child then learns to apply a label to himself/herself. This learning process is characterized by a reward-punishment system which may be different for boys and girls. A girl may be rewarded for being "cute" while a boy may be disapprovingly told that "boys don't cry, only girls do". Since psychological rewards and personal acceptance are important for everyone (and especially for children) the social learning syllogism is "I want rewards. I am rewarded for doing boy things. Therefore I want to be a boy" (Kohlberg, 1974 : 139).

We can summarize the essence of the social learning theory diagrammatically as follows:



(Adapted from Kessler and McKenna, 1978 : 88)

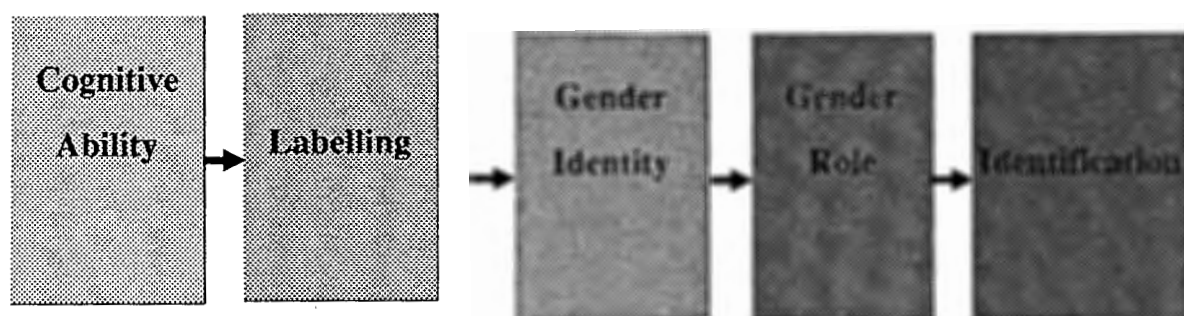
4.4.3 Cognitive development theory

In contrast with the passive role allocated to the child itself in acquiring its own gender identity in both the Freudian and social learning paradigms, the cognitive development paradigm emphasizes the child's active participation in the process of gender identity creation and the consequence of this process for the child's structuring of reality itself. According to Kohlberg (1974), the gender identity of a child "stabilizes" at about the same age at which the child begins to acquire language skills (this is before children develop an awareness of genital differences). Once this gender identity is stabilized it becomes the basic means by which a person structures his/her experiences. This is in accordance with Stoller's studies on gender which indicates that gender identity ("I am a girl", "I am a boy" - see 4.4.2 above) is the primary identity any human being holds - the first as well as the most permanent and most important.

As opposed to the social learning syllogism, cognitive theory assumes the syllogism sequence to be: "I am a boy; therefore the opportunity to do boy things (and gain approval for doing them) is rewarding" (Kohlberg, 1974 : 139). The advantage of Kohlberg's theory is that it does not leave us with socialization as a

process imposed upon a passive recipient but gives us a theory encompassing a process in which ego development is directly connected to gender development. Only such a theory can explain the link between ego and gender development formulated by Hunt: "Individuals are born into social classes, but they are socialized into their class position. Thus working class boys learn to accept as natural a lifetime as wage earners; their sisters learn to accept as natural a lifetime as adjuncts to the male" (Hunt, 1980 : 9).

We can summarize the essence of the cognitive development theory diagrammatically as follows:



(Adapted from Kessler and McKenna, 1978 : 88)

In the course of the development of mainstream gender-theory, from the freudian to social learning to cognitive development theories, the difference between sex and gender (sex being biologically female/male and gender being socially created - women/men) became clear. Nevertheless, these theories about gender creation still contain an inner logic of sex in the final analysis inevitably leading to gender. In other words, the reality of human beings reproducing sexually and females and males having different genitals contains within itself both the capacity and the necessity for a social division (gender division) between the sexes.

While some feminist authors (such as Rubin and Oakley) would question the hierarchy following on the creation of a sex/gender system, they (and most other

gender theorists) do not see gender creation in itself as problematic. It is gender creation (as the most fundamental political act in our society) itself that must be questioned, not what happens to the different genders after their identity has been established, for this last structure will always be hierarchical because it is the *raison d'être* of the political act of gender creation.

It is here where the marxist method (notwithstanding marxism^{up to} date underplaying the importance of gender) can make an important contribution to social theory by analysing gender within a historical materialist research tradition. In thus analysing "gender" as a social construction, and at present the most important cognitive framework in terms of which human beings interpret their world (see Kohlberg, 1974 : 139), I put my emphasis on the reality that this social creation takes place within the socio-political system of patriarchy. In our capitalist industrial society, the specific form of patriarchy is characterized by mother-monopolized childrearing. The woman-mother in this social system is the basic organizational feature of the gender creation system and is fundamental to the creation of the gender division of labour.

4.5 Reproduction

4.5.1 Introduction

Within the marxist tradition, three different forms of reproduction can be identified: biological reproduction, social reproduction and the reproduction of the labour force. Biological reproduction refers to the act of childbearing and social reproduction to the reproduction of the conditions sustaining a social system. An analysis of social reproduction is thus a structural analysis. The reproduction of the labour force refers to the maintenance of workers, the socialization of potential workers and the initiation of both potential and current workers into the gender related hierarchy present in the social system of gender divided labour (see Hunt, 1980 : 9).

Whereas a direct link can be made between biological reproduction and women, social reproduction and the reproduction of the labour force are essentially social phenomena. In carrying out a structural analysis of a patriarchal society, as well as an analysis of the reproduction of the labour force, we must begin with the social system of mother-monopolized childrearing.

4.6 Mothering

"What we learn is what our mothers do, not what they say" (Arcana, 1979 : 13).

"The infant's ultimate aim is to be loved and satisfied, without being under any obligation to give anything in return" (Balint, 1937 : 82).

The socialization of children takes place in a specific social and political context. The system of childrearing is directly part of a society and as such determined by its dominant political structures (Roberts, 1984 : 198). Since the political structures are in turn determined by the material base of society (see 8.2 below) we can structurally place the system of childrearing beyond the mere psychologi-

cal initiation of children into a society. The mode of childrearing is directly linked to the material base itself.

A human newborn is totally dependent on human ("adult") care because it has neither the physical nor the physiological capacities that are essential for survival. For this reason the humans caring for the infant in this period must both mediate and provide its total environment and supply physical care. The needs of the infant are so total that the infant is dependent on whoever is providing the specific care needed at that very moment. Infancy is nevertheless not characterized by material dependency only but also by emotional dependence (Flax, 1983 :246-252). For this reason the caretaker must also act as the infant's "external ego" (Mahler, 1968 : 16). Emotional attachment, in contrast to physical dependence, develops in response merely to having material needs met (see Bowlby, 1967).

In early infancy the infant's experiences are totally narcissistic; its experience of itself is not only as itself, but also as everything else in its world. There is a complete fusion between the "I" of the infant and everything else around it. "Originally the infant's lack of the reality principle - its narcissistic relation to reality - is total" (Chododrow, 1978 : 61). As the mother is usually the most prominent part of the world of the infant, its narcissistic relation to the mother is extremely strong.

Very soon the infant becomes aware of the reality that this mother who is able to give (and does indeed give food, comfort, care, etc.) is also able not to give; to take away that which the infant wants, needs or likes. Because the infant is not (yet) aware of the fact that it is indeed separate from the mother, this separateness (for example, loss of breast, comfort and so on) is experienced as a narcis-

sistic blow to itself, since a part of itself - the mother - hurts itself - the infant. This narcissistic blow in itself inevitably leads to frustration.

This frustration is very important as it is the beginning of the infant's own ego development. The infant is "forced" through the frustration experienced to begin to perceive itself as itself and the rest of its world as separate. This frustration and ambivalence towards itself and its (up to now) narcissistic world lead to the development of anxiety. This anxiety is in itself very important as it generates the development of ego capacities which enable the infant to deal with anxiety in later life. Anxiety is thus not only part of the force behind the development of ego capacities but also part of the creation of ego boundaries (Chodorow, 1978 : 69). If the mother serves as the external ego for too long, the infant is prevented from developing capacities for dealing with anxiety (see 4.6.2 below).

The infant's feeling of dependence increases as it becomes conscious of it, whilst in reality its dependence (in general terms) is actually declining. With this growing consciousness the infant's ambivalence is not restricted to "separateness" but extends to a growing "will" not to be acted upon by its world but to act upon it. In other words, the infant now wants to influence its environment, not simply react to it. This "will" to act upon its world by far exceeds the ability of the infant to act in accordance with its own needs. There is thus a tension between desire and capacity (Flax, 1983 : 254), and in mother-monopolized childrearing it is the mother (previously omnipresent) who is (for the infant) the centre of this tension. For the infant the mother is both cause and consequence of this tension.

The mother as mother (and thus as a separate person) is thus "created" by the infant (for itself) in a time period characterized by frustration, ambivalence and anxiety experienced by the infant in its relation to the mother. This is bound to

have consequences for the relationship between infant and mother. For Dinnerstein (1977) the main consequence is that children will always have feelings of hostility towards the mother because she is the one always responsible (in mother-monopolized childrearing) for shattering the infant's illusions of omnipotence. The infant becomes an "I" only in so far as it discovers that the mother is "not I", and because of its increasing consciousness of dependence the infant also recognizes (against its will?) that in this "new" "I"/ "not-I" relationship the mother is by far the more powerful.

It is important that in a mother-monopolized childrearing system this frustration, ambivalence and anxiety are all experienced by the infant as its own reactions to the relationship with the mother (since she is by far the most important part of the infant's narcissistic world). For Fairbairn (1952) infants do not reject infantile negative objects and emotions; on the contrary, they internalize them in order to be able to control them. For this reason the infantile negative emotions must be "hated" as they were once part of the narcissistic infant who was finally rejected.

For Fairbairn these negative objects and emotions are internalized because they seem to be indispensable, and they are repressed because they seem to be unbearable. Brown formulates this in these words : "To the baby hunger is a frightening situation, not only because feeding is important to him, but also because...'the very young child, with no more than a minimal appreciation of time, is unable to bear tension; he does not possess the knowledge so consoling to older human beings that loss, frustration, pain and discomfort' are usually but temporary and will be followed by relief" (Brown, 1961 : 73).

The child's relationship with its mother is analysed as "the foundation upon which all his/her future relationships with live objects are based" (Fairbairn,

quoted by Chodorow, 1978 : 79). This is the direct result of the reality that in our society it is the mother (biological or social) of the child who provides nearly exclusive care for the infant. As a consequence, the infant develops its own ego mainly in direct relation to the mother. (10) The social process of mothering will be reproduced by the infant itself when it reproduces since our early experiences do not disappear as we develop.

According to Flax, "They [our early experiences] are retained in the unconsciousness and continue to reverberate throughout adult life. We are often unaware of the reverberations since they are expressed in feeling or bodily forms (such as psychosomatic illness), not thought" (Flax, 1983 : 254). In other words, human beings unconsciously reproduce the very structures that (socially) produce them. Women's mothering reproduces itself cyclically. (This same phenomenon is also present in the "animal" world see Harlow, 1966).

The internalization of infantile emotions thus means not only is the child created (by the meeting of its needs, creation of new needs and meeting or failing to meet them) but the future caretaker in the child itself is also created. Infants are not only reproduced, but in this process of reproduction material (and thus social, emotional, etc.) needs and frustrations are created by the process itself. These needs and frustrations can only be "satisfied"/"solved" (or partially "satisfied"/"solved") when, and if, the infant later "escapes" from being the (powerless) infant to being the (powerful) caretaker. If the mode of childrearing thus treats a girl and a boy differently, it is a given that their needs and frustrations to be met in their own caretaker roles will be different as well. (11)

The infant's dependence on the caretaker has a further consequence in that it also creates an intense anxiety at the prospect of a possible loss of the object on which the infant is physically and emotionally dependent. This anxiety is espe-

cially important in the period when ego development takes place, as disappointment/ frustration constitutes a narcissistic insult to the infant (see De Groot, 1932 : 492). For this reason Fairbairn labels the early period "infantile dependence" and sees most infantile activity as a direct (conscious/unconscious) reaction to this feeling of helplessness (Fairbairn, 1952).

The mode of childrearing is on all counts an extremely important process. Just as the DNA molecule determines the overall programme and form of the organism's relationship to its environment (and the limits within which somatic change as result of this relationship can occur), so too does the mode of childrearing produce a programme (within the unconscious) that will serve as a set of "unconscious instructions" which constitutes the individual within its social environment. As in the case of the genetic programme the limits within which change can take place are strictly limited once the "program" has been set out. For this reason the mode of childrearing is the dominant overall (social, political, sexual, technological, etc.) relation in the same way as the DNA molecule is somatically dominant over the interaction between the organism and its environment (see Balbus, 1982 : 349).

Finally, because dependence is a given in early infancy we tend to think that domination by the caretaker is not only possible but indeed necessary. If this is true then all human relations (also the relations between human beings, non-human beings and things) will always be characterized by a struggle for domination (by the powerful) and reaction against domination (by the powerless; and vice versa), as the caretaker/infant relationship is the prototype of all relations. But is the link between dependence and domination a given? Maybe it is not only the concept of domination that is problematic in itself and must be rethought, but also for the concept of dependence and particularly the relationship between the two concepts.

4.6.1 The absent father

One of the consequences of the development of the industrial mode of production is that the urbanization which resulted from it has increased the geographical and emotional distance between the domestic and industrial mode of production; thus between home and workplace. This has increased the personal power of the mother, and consequently the child became more powerless in direct relation to its dependence on the mother. The same phenomenon is present in cases where "mother-like" caretakers (all women) "stand in" for the "working mother". In South Africa a further dimension is given to this "mother-like" figure's relation to infants, since it is black domestic workers (who are socially "totally" powerless) who play an important part in the rearing of white children. In this relationship the powerless black domestic worker is able to monopolize the power inherently present in mother-monopolized childrearing. The infant's feelings of frustration, ambivalence and anxiety usually present towards a gender category here thus have gender and race consequences (see 7.4 below).

For Dinnerstein "every 'I' first emerges in relation to an 'it' which is not at all clearly an 'I'. The separate 'I'ness of the other person is a discovery, and an insight achieved over time. Small children do not completely have it (an example is the tendency of three- or four-year-olds to assume that you, whom they have just met, must somehow already know by name all the people they know) and the reader need not be told that there are many adults who have only a gross, rudimentary mental grasp of it" (Dinnerstein, 1977 : 106). As a result of the process of mother-monopolized childrearing the infant's first experience of the mother is as an "it", while the father (being so peripheral at this stage) is first experienced as a significant figure only after the concept of an own identity has been established, or at least begun to be established (Kirkman and Grieve, 1984 : 492). In other words, in general infants become "aware" of the father only after

the development of a rational appreciation of other human beings as independent of themselves and thus "I's" in themselves. For this reason the infant's love for the father is always under the sway of reality, while the infant's original love for the mother is without this sense of reality (it is narcissistic) (Balint, 1937). (12)

4.6.2 Mothering and girls

"In relation to her own child, woman repeats her own mother-child history" (Deutsch, 1944 : 215, quoted by Chodorow, 1974 : 47).

"A woman is her mother. That is the main thing" (Sexton, quoted by Arcana, 1979 : 1).

According to Klein and Riviere (cited by Chodorow, 1972 : 47) the experience of mothering involves a double identification for the mother. In mothering the mother identifies with her own child and in this identification she experiences (re-experiences) herself as the cared-for child. For Chodorow the particular nature of this double identification for the individual mother is closely related to her relationship with her own mother (Chodorow, 1974 : 47).

Within this process of double identification (for the mother) there is another duality present. Because women as mothers were mothered by women, their identification (as the "new" mother) with her female child establishes a direct "duplication" (reproduction) of her own specific mother-child relationship. As the "new" mother experienced herself as a continuation/extension of her own mother (because of her mother experiencing her as such), she now also experiences her female child as a continuation of herself. In this identification with the female child, "the mother employs the 'transitivism' of the psychotic - 'I am you and you are me'" (Fliess, 1961 : 48).

On the other hand, because the "new" mother's relationship with her father was characterized by identification after the establishment of an own ego (separation/individuation), the "new" mother's experience of the male child will be characterized by "love" through separation, and not by love through fusion as with the girl. For this reason Chodorow concludes that, "mothers experience daughters as one with themselves; their relationship to daughters is 'narcissistic', while those with their sons are more analytic" (Chodorow, 1978 : 195). (13)

As a result of the ego boundary fusion the mother experiences with her daughter, the daughter is not "forced", as is the boy, to "come to terms" with the issues of individuation/separation/dependency. She thus (like her mother in her own childhood) does not establish strong ego boundaries. (14) Her ego boundaries are more flexible and she thus defines herself much more in terms of her relation to other people than what the boy does.(15) The boy with his development of strong ego boundaries defines himself to a much greater extent as separate, and as a result of this defines other people in terms of himself and not vice versa.

"It is difficult, then, for daughters in a western middle-class family to develop self-esteem. Most psychoanalytic and social theorists claim that the mother inevitably represents to her daughter (and son) regression, passivity, dependence and lack of orientation to reality whereas their father represents progression, activity, independence and reality orientation. Given the value implications of this dichotomy there are advantages for the son in giving up his mother and identifying with his father. For the daughter, feminine gender identification means identification with a devalued, passive mother, and personal maternal identification is with a mother whose own self-esteem is low. Conscious rejection of her oedipal maternal identification, however, remains an unconscious rejection and devaluation of herself, because of her continuing pre-oedipal identification and boundary confusion with her mother" (Chodorow, 1974 : 65). (16)

Furthermore, the specific emotional attachment between mother and daughter (enunciated by the mother as mothered girl) means that, although the father becomes the primary erotic object (towards whom erotic feelings are projected), he emotionally remains secondary in terms of the dependency of the emotional relationship between the mothered daughter and the mother herself. For this reason girls remain in a "bisexual triangle", as Chodorow labelled it; they usually make a sexual resolution in favour of men (and their fathers), but retain an "internal emotional triangle" with their mother (Chodorow, 1978 : 140). Consequently, women never establish an as strong and separate ego as men do. (17)

4.7 Problems of mothering

4.7.1 Identification and intimacy

The different ways in which mothers experience boys (separate) and girls (narcissistic), together with the reality that infants are the sole responsibility of women, mean that women as mothers produce daughters with mothering capacities and the need to mother. (18) These capacities and needs are inherent in the basic structure of the mother-daughter relationship although it is absent from the mother-son relationship. As a result of their own mother-son relationships men are basically prepared for the impersonal world of public life, while women are prepared for the personal life of the family.

As a consequence of the mother-daughter relationship, women are emotionally situated as part of a relational triangle (see 4.6 above). In this triangle the father (men) tends to stay emotionally secondary. A woman's heterosexual relationship is thus in itself problematic as women have more complex relational needs and capacities than men. One of the most prominent emotional causes of friction in heterosexual relationships is women's need for, and men's fear of intimacy.

The fear men have of intimacy can be phrased as follows:

- (i) - the mother made me separate
 - the mother dominated me
 - domination is established through separation (it is only in being separate that you can dominate);
- (ii) - I fear the domination of mother/women (the mother being a prototype of women);
- (iii) - to escape my powerlessness I must reverse the roles; I must become the powerful (dominator)
- ; (iv) - if I am intimate I cannot be separate
 - if I am not separate I cannot be powerful
 - if I am not powerful, I am powerless
 - I fear and hate being powerless;
- (v) I will overcome my anxiety of domination by staying separate (not being intimate). (19)

For women the situation is different. If a woman is involved in a heterosexual relationship the triangular situation is broken. For women the only way to satisfy this emotional need is to recreate the primary relational constellation, which can only be done (in a heterosexual relationship) by recreating the mother-child relationship itself. In other words, by having a child of their own as child would complete the relational triangle. "Women come to want and need primary relationships to children. These wants and needs result from wanting intense primary relationships, which men tend not to provide, both because of their

place in women's oedipal constellation and because of their difficulties with intimacy" (Chodorow, 1978 : 202).

Women thus turn to children to fulfil emotional needs men cannot fulfil. The "Catch 22" situation, however, is the reality that the complex emotional needs of the "adult" woman cannot be fulfilled by an infant. The mother is disillusioned in her attempt to obtain this emotional fulfilment from her relationship with the child because the needs and desires she thought the child would satisfy are frustrated.

In having a child the woman gains the opportunity to recreate the mother-child relationship but instead of being the helpless infant she now becomes the all-powerful mother. (20) Women do not only turn to children to complete the triangular situation, but as the child-wish in itself created anxiety felt towards the mother, the child-wish is thus also an attempt to overcome that anxiety. It is only in mothering a child herself that a woman can "escape" her own (powerless) infancy by changing the roles of the mother-daughter relationship.

The all-powerful mother in mother-monopolized childrearing (as experienced by the infant) serves as a prototype of children's vision of women (see 4.6 above). The fear and hate felt towards the mother (although present in both girls and boys) takes on completely different forms in girls and boys. Men in general (as a result of being separate) will show their anxiety towards domination by women much more (their hatred for women is visible - see Brownmiller, 1975).

Women, on the other hand (as a result of the narcissitic relation to the mother), will show less of their anxiety; it will rather be suppressed. This suppression in itself has a negative influence on women's self-esteem (see 4.6 above). Despite the reality that boys and girls both suffer from the system of mother-monopo-

lized childrearing, it is equally important to realize that this whole process takes place in relation to women only. It is on women that both boys and girls depend and against whom they are obliged to struggle for the formation of their selfhood (Balbus, 1982 : 306).

"The crucial psychological fact is that all of us, female as well as male, fear the will of women. Man's dominion over what we think of as the world rests on a terror that we all feel: the terror of sinking back wholly into the helplessness of infancy. As the old saying insists, there is another realm that interpenetrates all too intimately with what is formally recognized as the world: a realm already ruled, despotically enough, by the hand that rocks the cradle.

"Female will is embedded in female power, which is under present conditions the earliest and profoundest prototype of absolute power. It emanates, at the outset, from a boundless, all-embracing presence. We live by its grace while our lives are most fragile. We grow human within its aura. Its reign is total, all-pervasive, throughout our most vulnerable, our most fatefully impressionable years. Power of this kind, concentrated in one sex and exerted at the outset of both, is far too potent and dangerous a force to be allowed free sway in adult life. To contain it, to keep it under control and harness it to chosen purposes, is a vital need, a vital task, for every mother-raised human" (Dinnerstein, 1977 : 161).

4.7.2 Domination and competition

The basic relation of domination between mother and infant serves as a prototype of all other relations (see 4.6 above). For this reason the most prevailing kind of relation in our patriarchal society is domination (Simonon, 1983 : 200). As a result the most prominent ethos in our society is the ethos of conflict and competition, as it is through conflict and competition that domination is established. But domination is not only problematic "for itself" but also "in itself".

"The threat of insurrection always accompanies domination; one of the reasons control is so unsatisfying is that it begets not a sense of power but a sense of fear. Suppressed people seem always to be lying, plotting and deviously seeking their own good, a good that is counter to the good of the dominators. Thus the dominators hate those they oppress" (French, 1985 : 128). Although I agree with the link that French makes between domination and fear, I disagree with the internal logic of the argument.

For French, "men do not attempt to establish control over women because they hate and fear them; rather, men hate and fear women because they must control them, because control over women is essential to their self-definition" (French, 1985 : 535). Within my research tradition French should be rewritten to read: men do attempt to establish control over women because men fear women, and as a result of their fear they hate women and thus establish control over women to "overcome" their fear. In their doing so this control becomes essential for their self-definition.

Besides the fear and hate, the competitive ethos has another important component: the absence of men from the process of human reproduction. Mary O'Brien argues that men's alienated relationship with reproduction is carried over into their concept of being and time. For Christini di Stefano, "The strong connections between heroism, masculinity and the willingness to risk life are unmistakable. These connections are further strengthened if we stop to ponder the gender specific dimensions of the heroic quest for immortality" (Di Stefano, 1983 : 642).

For Simone de Beauvoir these gender-specific dimensions and men's obsession with risking life are related to the high value placed on risking life. But it may well be that men's absence from biological and social reproduction itself led to

their obsession with risking (and even taking) life, and not that risking life has always had a higher value attached to it. O'Brien concludes that, "Men have always sought principles of continuity outside of natural continuity. Historically there have been all kinds of such principles, some of which have attempted to subsume both biological continuity and political society, such as hereditary monarchy and primogeniture. There have been theories of continuity which have nothing to do with human reality at all, but cleave to a notion of eternity expressed in contemplative or religious terms...The fact is that men make principles of continuity because they are separated from genetic continuity..." (O'Brien, 1981 : 33).

4.7.3 Relationship to nature

"Ecology is universally defined as the heart of the balance and interrelationship of all life on earth" (Leland, 1983 : 72).

In a social system of mother-monopolized childrearing our frustrations, ambivalence and anxiety in infancy are experienced in our relationship with our mother in the process of identification- separation-individuation. The relationship with our mother then becomes characterized by a dialectical unconscious desire, first to unite with the (loved) mother and second to defeat the (hated) mother. Objectification, in other words the union with something that has been reduced to an object and can be controlled by a subject, leads to underpersonification.

Our underpersonification of women leads us to define women relationally; as someone's wife, mother, daughter - even a nun is the bride of Christ. This relational definition of women has its dialectical ultimate in defining women as the other (De Beauvoir, 1953 : 16), the antithesis of the thesis (Eve and Adam); the object of the subject. (21) The process of objectification first occurs in the

mother-child relationship which then in turn serves as the base (prototype) of our dialectical and hierarchical relationship with the world around us (as there is a direct link between the mode of childrearing and the general epistemology and ontology). The main problem with hierarchical structures is that they always involve concepts of "higher" and "lower" in which the former inevitably exploits the latter (Benney, 1983 : 141).

The prevailing relationship between humans and the rest of the ecosystem is thus consequently also characterized by objectification. This phenomenon is articulated clearly by Francis Bacon: "I am come in very truth leading you to Nature and her children to bind her to your service and make her your slave" (Bacon, quoted by Farrington, 1951 : 197, quoted by Keller, 1983 : 190). In linking the mode of childrearing, objectification and our relationship to nature, Dinnerstein argues that our difficulty in coming to terms with mother's separate human subjectivity (in the process of identification-separation -individuation) has important consequences for our stance towards both women and nature. For Dinnerstein, the indistinctiveness of the "early" mother's boundaries (her completeness) results in the infant being incapable of distinguishing between the mother and nature [the ecosystem] (Dinnerstein, 1977 : 108).

For the child who has been socialized in the system of mother-monopolized childrearing, reaction to childhood and the objectification of the mother is thus the prototype of the objectification of the ecosystem. For Balbus, "The domination of nature is domination of the mother: the symbolization of nature as [the] absolute, dangerous other which must be tamed lest it destroy us, is rooted in the unconscious childhood symbolization of the mother as an other who must be punished for having betrayed our love. Objectification is 'getting back at mommy'" (Balbus, 1982 : 336). (22)

By recognizing the general connection between the mode of childrearing and general epistemology and ontology, we are led to see exploitation in itself no longer as the "biggest" human problem; exploitation is an inevitable symptom of the process of objectification. To do away with exploitation (even theoretically) is impossible as long as we logically think and act in terms of a dialectical hierarchical epistemology and ontology. This hypothesis is problematic to marxism (and even more to other paradigms) because marxists see the domination of human beings over nature as the force behind humanizing the world ("the animal merely uses its environment, man masters it" - Marx, quoted by French, 1985 : 119). (23)

An equation representing the general marxist position would be the following :

(nature+human beings) versus (technology+human beings) = humanity.

Within the "versus" phenomenon two concepts are important; labour and knowledge. In other words it is in our struggle with nature and technology, with the help of labour and knowledge, that we become more fully human. In simple terms, labour and knowledge together (within the context of nature and technology) equal power, and the most important sociological problem is "method" of "controlling" the "versus-position" (for marxists this is best done by socialism). In no way is the dialectical hierarchical relation resulting from the "versus-relation" being questioned itself; it is seen as the moving force behind civilization. We can thus say that (even) marxism (being so interwoven with objectification) is in the final analysis very little more than a critical patriarchal mode of epistemology and ontology.

An epistemology and ontology working with liberation will have to work with an equation reading:

nature = technology = humanity.

Our goal should not be to "use" nor to "master" our environment but to become part of it. Instead of striving to control the relationship between objects (powerful) and subjects (powerless), this distinction and the dialectic itself must be questioned. Only if we can start with this process will we be able to start coping with our own frustrations, ambivalence and anxiety that originated in the process of identification-separation-individuation.

"The Newtonian, patriarchal, mechanistic view of our world, upon which the industrial revolution of the last century was founded, was based upon 'mastery of nature'. This view has been superseded by the recognition of ecology, that our universe is an interplay of dynamic natural forces, energies which flow, bounce and weave their way through our reality. We see ourselves as part of nature, part of a wonderful, intricate, fragile yet resilient web of interconnections. This view is non-linear, non-hierarchical, multidimensional, curved, organic and feminine in foundation" (Simondon, 1983 : 198).

4.8 The family

"I thought I saw two people, but it was only a man and his wife" (Russian proverb).

"Famulus means domestic slave, and familia is the total number of slaves belonging to one man" (Engels, 1972 : 120).

The social and political unit within which mothering in mother-monopolized childrearing takes place is the family. The family as a family in contemporary capitalist industrial societies is not so directly linked to production as in preindustrial and precapitalist societies. The family in contemporary society nevertheless remains the locus of labour power production and reproduction (O'Laughlin, 1977 : 17). It is through the family that people enter into relations of production, reproduction and consumption.

For Eisenstein, "The family is a series of relations which define women's activities both internal and external to it. Because the family is a structure of relationships which connect individuals to the economy, the family is a social, economic, political, and cultural unit of a society" (Eisenstein, 1979 : 48). The family is a very important functional structure in contemporary society. Although I find the distinction that Marx and Engels make between the bourgeois and proletarian families problematic (see 1.3.2 above), there are fundamental differences between families of different classes and families in different socio-political systems.

"Many of us have been to an archetypical meeting in which someone stands up and asserts that the nuclear family ought to be abolished because it is degrading and constraining to women. Usually, someone else (often representing a third world position) follows on her heels, pointing out that the attack on the family

represents a white, middle-class position, and that other women need their families for support and survival. Evidently both speakers are, in some sense, right. And just as evidently they aren't talking about the same families" (Rapp, 1978 : 278). (24)

4.9 Childhood

"Women and children are always mentioned in the same breath ('Women and children to the forts!'). The special tie women have with children is recognized by everyone. I submit, however, that the nature of this bond is no more than shared oppression. And that, moreover, this oppression is intertwined and mutually reinforcing in such complex ways that we will be unable to speak of the liberation of women without also discussing the liberation of children, and vice versa" (Firestone, 1970 : 81). (26)

"We have loved infants for our own amusement, like monkeys [objects], not like human beings" (Montaigne)

"Who makes decisions for whom depends on who controls scarce resources, and children are possibly the most precious resource" (Lorber in Gross, 1979 : 702).

Throughout the history of social science, politics and economics have been the central issues. Within this framework, age and sex hierarchies were not considered important (Poster, 1978 : 144). Rather, they were seen as natural phenomena and thus outside the field of study of social science. "Nothing may seem to us more 'natural' than childhood; and yet, this assumption is itself a product of human history" (Hoyles, 1979 : 1).

One of the most important studies done on the history of childhood is Philippe Ariés's *Centuries of childhood*. According to Ariés, the idea of childhood is a recent development. "In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist;

this is not to suggest that children were neglected, foresaken or despised. The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult. That is why, as soon as the child could live without the constant solicitude of his mother, his nanny or his cradle-rocker, he belonged to adult society" (Ariés, 1962 : 128). For Van der Berg (cited by Aries, 1962), the child has not always been the child; it has become one. It is the hierarchical relation that exists between "children" and "adults" that constitutes the child as a child.

Today children are seen and treated as apolitical, asexual, but not agender, and totally dependent on adults. This in itself is our first problem in attempting to reconstruct childcare. For Lee Comer, the most important lesson people must learn is that children are not special, vulnerable, defenceless and incapable, and easily traumatised. "The fact that they appear so is because we have made them so" (Comer, 1979 : 155). Childcare is an issue which raises fundamental questions about how society is structured. As such it is an issue "which involves shifting the boundaries between the 'private' and the 'public' spheres" (Cock, Emdon and Klugman, 1986 : 88). An analysis of childcare is a material analysis of the working of age and sex hierarchies in society.

4.9.1 Discipline

Whenever we work with the concept of discipline we work by definition with the concept of power and the relation between the powerful and the powerless. Generally, children obey parents not because of the logic or justice of an order but rather because parents have a power advantage (means to enforce their decision) within the relationship (Reich, 1972 : 354). In this way children are conditioned to accept and cooperate when given arbitrary orders. Authoritarian

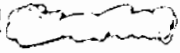
personalities develop as a defence mechanism against authoritarian structures themselves.

Within the authoritarian structure in which children are raised, even constructive advice from the powerful (parent) creates a negative reaction in the powerless (child) because it contributes to an increased feeling (by the child) of the omnipresent power of the parent. For example, within an authoritarian structure a child told by a parent not to play with fire because it will burn experiences the burning of the fire (if it does play with it) in a physical and psychological way. Physically it comes to fear the fire that caused pain. Psychologically the child experiences the burn as a direct reprisal of the powerful parent for the child's own disobedience. Again the feeling of powerlessness of the child (in relation to the parent) increases and with it the child's reaction against its own experience of the powerful parent's "abuse of its omnipresent power". Unconsciously the child is drawn into the power-ethic-game: "To survive I must be the most powerful". Authoritarian structures reproduce themselves when people try to react against them.

The same phenomenon is present in the use of power through physical punishment. A structural logic is created (in the battered child) that the only way to escape physical abuse is to be the powerful party within the structure of legitimate violence. The attempts by the status quo to "control" violence on television, in films, on the street and so on cannot possibly succeed and remain superficial as long as the violence (physical/psychological) of parents (and others) against children is seen as legitimate and indeed positive, because it is under the cover of "necessary" discipline. The same is true of superficial attempts to create peace while the "war-structure" of society in itself "serves" the society by creating the opportunity for people to participate in legitimate violence and thus satisfy

psychological needs that were created in their childhood through the institutionalization of the power/violence ethic.

4.9.2 Labour

With industrialization, the separation between the home (domestic mode of production) and the workplace (industrial mode of production) increased and simultaneously with the disintegration of the extended family the dependence of children on fewer and fewer adults increased. Within the nuclear family the child became not only more isolated but totally separated  from socially productive labour. For Hoyles, "the most fundamental separation which children in contemporary society suffer from is the separation from labour. Before the industrial revolution, most work was done in or around the home and the household was an economic unit. But by the nineteenth century the factory system had eliminated many of the production functions of the family. Work had become split from family life..." (Hoyles, 1979 : 5).

In pre-industrial society labour "created" a "natural" continuum between generations (they were involved within the same process of production at the same time) and thereby gave the young child the opportunity of establishing self-esteem in direct relation to reality and society ("I actively participate in productive labour - I am worth something to society"). Today this is not possible.

Nevertheless, children "need" to be socialized "into" society and "need" to be kept busy. A very important phenomenon used to fill this gap between "reality" and "time" ("To keep them busy") is toys. Toys are political instruments par excellence. Toys are not only used to keep children occupied but also to appropriate the imagination of children in such a way that it can be formed and moulded by and "into" the dominant structures of society. For this reason toys are not representing a world of unfettered imagination and fantasy, but repre-

sent a particular kind of parody of the "adult" world. The political importance of toys is nowhere more visible than in the differences between toys for boys and for girls.

Toys for boys are characterized by adventure and action. Their toys bear no direct relation to the work boys are most likely to do as adults (Wollen, 1979 : 54). Psychologically, however, boys' toys do bear (contrary to Wollen's view) a direct relation to a boy's future role, as he is always the omnipresent powerful individual in control of the adventurous and action-packed game. This feeling of "being powerful" and "in control" is never lost. In this unconscious striving for power and control, men do feel powerful (and mostly, in relation to women and children they are powerful).

Toys for girls are totally different. They have a two-way direct relation to the expected role of the future woman. In short they are rooted in reality and the reproduction of reality itself (which is always a socially created reality) and not in the control and transformation of reality. Girls' toys are thus a kind of apprenticeship for their expected future domestic role. These toys have an inherent domestic logic - girls are not encouraged to think beyond the domestic unit of reproduction. But this restriction is "compensated" for even in childhood when the possibility is created that they will one day wield (as their powerful mothers do) authority over children of their own, instead of over dolls.

The separation between adults and children in our society is so extreme that children are (strictly speaking) not an integral part of society (they are not "full members"). (26) The world of the child is the world of the vulnerable, the apolitical, the asexual, the helpless, the total dependent who has no sense of reality and thus indulges itself in fantasy and toys instead of reality and work. This separate world in which modern children make their childhood discoveries more and

more with materials, instead of with other human beings (of all sexes, ages, races), restricts the perceptual awareness and conceptual ability of the child to experience itself as part of a social eco-system. This "creates" an even more authoritarian personality structure in the child in its reaction to the impersonal, authoritarian structures of its environment.

4.10 Some sociological aspects of the contemporary family and marriage

"Any intelligent woman who reads the marriage contract, and then goes into it, deserves all the consequences" (Unknown).

"The marriage contract is the only important legal contract in which the terms are not listed" (Cronan, 1978 : 224).

With industrial development the basic family structure changed drastically. As the urbanization process (resulting from industrialization) increased, the family became smaller, more isolated and more hierarchical as the personal dependence of women and children on one specific man increased. Simultaneously, men's control over women's productive and reproductive labour (in both modes of production) increased, and as a direct consequence their social and personal power vis á vis women also increased.

The industrial development "created" the separate spheres of production and reproduction (domestic and industrial). This same process also "created" a complementary dialectical relationship between the two spheres. Not only does the separation of the two spheres influence the ability of women to work in the industrial mode of production, but the organizational structure of the industrial mode of production and reproduction itself constitutes an incentive (or no viable alternative) to become primarily involved in the domestic mode of reproduction and production - in other words, to marry and consequently become secondary to

socially valued production and lack access to social and political power. For Cronan, "...marriage is the model for all other forms of discrimination against women. The relationships between men and women outside marriage follow this basic pattern" (Cronan, 1978 : 244).

The individual is always part of a social system and is always (unconsciously) active in reproducing that social system: "...people do not marry to reproduce the nuclear family or work to sustain the capitalist economy. Yet it is nevertheless the unintended consequence...of their activity" (Bhasker, quoted by Wilson, 1983 : 9). The so-called "ethic of individualism" (of the autonomous nature of personal experiences and motivation) is a myth masking our real dependence vis-à-vis the social system. We are both the products and the reproducers of the social system; we reproduce the very social structures that produce us.

The family is analysed more and more (at first mainly by members of the Frankfurt School) not only as a financial unit but also as a political unit with a political function. This political function is formulated simplistically by Hunt : "...boys learn to accept as natural a lifetime as wage earners; their sisters learn to accept as natural a lifetime as adjuncts to the male" (Hunt, 1980 : 9). Despite the ethic of the "childcentred society", children are powerless within a society whose basic ethic is the ethic of power. The powerlessness of children increases physiologically, financially and emotionally as the modern family becomes smaller and more socially isolated (Firestone, 1979 : 35).

Reich defines the family as a "factory for authoritarian ideologies and conservative structures. It forms the educational apparatus through which practically every individual of our society, from the moment of drawing his first breath has to pass...it is the conveyor belt between the economic structure of conservative society and its ideological superstructure" (Reich, quoted by Taylor, 1971 : 480).

For Kuhn, the family may be defined as property relations between husbands and wives and those property relations in action. "The family so defined provides the terms for psychic relations, for the production of sexed and class subjects for representations of relations of patriarchy and capital, that is, for the constitution of subjects in ideology. In these terms, the family becomes more than simply one ideological state apparatus among many, but the privileged place of the operation of ideology" (Kuhn, 1978 : 65).

The modern family is isolated, self-centred and hierarchically organized. Within this environment the powerless (women and children) are exploited by the powerful (men). The main sociological problems of marriage/the family (for the purposes of this section), can be summarized as follows.

First of all, the marriage contract is a labour contract providing free domestic labour. For this reason marriage remains at the centre of both class and gender exploitation. The role models within the family are the roles to which all other roles within a capitalist mode of production will refer (C.C.C.S. Women's Studies Group 1976, quoted by Kuhn, 1978 : 57). (27)

Second, society is so structured that there is no real alternative to marriage for women. Employment exploitation. low wages, social stigma, fear of attack, sexual exploitation and so on are all factors that make it nearly impossible not to marry (see Cronan, 1978 : 244). (28)

Third, because the nuclear family is the norm, even the majority of people not living in nuclear families still lives in "nuclear-type" isolated households. Our society does not provide an extended emotional support system. Although unsatisfactory, the nuclear unit still provides about the only real opportunity for intimate emotional relationships in contemporary industrial society (see note 24).

Fourth, it is important that, because of the power ethic, the performance principle and the self-centredness of modern society, people are not only unable to share in extended emotional relations but are also unwilling to share materially. Within the extended household structure the individual does not "get ahead". For this reason people "choose" a smaller household with fewer possible dependents and thus a greater chance of "getting ahead". Success is measured in terms of accumulated material wealth; the smaller the household the easier the process. This mode of power and competition is the direct result of the mode of childrearing (see 4.7.2 above).

Fifth, I find the argument that the high divorce rate signifies the breakdown of the institution of marriage problematic. Rather than an increased divorce rate signalling the "end" of the marriage institution, divorce itself is a symptom of the continuation of the marriage institution. First of all women's labour is still generally appropriated in the domestic mode of production after the divorce through childcare. It is usually women who are given the responsibility for children after the divorce. This confirms the hypothesis concerning the husband's appropriation of his wife's labour even after the marriage has been dissolved. Divorce does not signify the end of marriage as an institution; it is only a transformation of the form of marriage.

In addition, the divorced woman's labour (like that of all women) in the industrial mode of production is appropriated to a greater extent (than that of her divorced husband and all men) because it is usually assumed that women are not the primary breadwinners with dependents. This assumption is not necessarily true. According to Hall women-headed families form the fastest growing sector of the population (Hall, 1980 : 4). In developing countries 50% of women are chief breadwinners of their households (Jones, 1980 : 7). However, women's wages are in general lower than the cost of the reproduction of their own labour

power (see Beechey, 1982 : 258- 259). Thus women are neither viewed as wage workers nor paid enough (as wage workers) to become wage workers earning enough to reproduce their own labour power. (29)

Lastly, divorce is problematic for women, not least because of their isolation in the domestic mode of production. Most women are materially worse off after a divorce since they, usually, have both material and domestic dependents. Men after a divorce may have material dependents but generally have no domestic dependents.

This brings us to the sixth problem, namely that of the possibility of shared parenting. The first major difficulty in confronting mother monopolized childrearing is the reality that the only real power most women ever wield is that over their dependent children (Arcana, 1979 : 24). (30) Furthermore, it is in mothering that women achieve their main social definition. In our society women's biological role in social reproduction is (re)structured in such a way that it becomes a cultural vocation constituting them as the main childrearer. For this reason Ti Grace Atkinson is correct in stating that sex [gender] class is a political construction: women are not (according to Atkinson) oppressed because of biological reproduction, but because this reproduction "capacity" is defined as a function. "The truth is that childbearing isn't the function of men oppressing women" (Atkinson, quoted by Eisenstein, 1979 : 44). It is per se only exploited (powerless) people's purpose that can be re-defined (by the powerful) as a function, or, for that matter, a biological capacity.

A second major difficulty in changing the current mode of childrearing is a phenomenon already discussed, namely the social reality that human beings unconsciously reproduce the very social structures that produce them. This phenomenon, while making social evolution possible, also makes social revolu-

tion just about impossible. As formulated by Balbus, "What the individual learns in the course of his or her conscious sexual, political and technological encounters is never sufficient to produce a transformation in the individual's unconscious mode of symbolization that was formed during his or her childhood" (Balbus, 1982 : 349).

Shared parenting would at least undermine and most probably over time eliminate the base of the domination/exploitation ethic currently present in the relations between the sexes and between human beings and their environment in general. Shared parenting is the base line for the establishment of an epistemology and ontology not characterized by objectification per se. (31) Emotionally children brought up by people from both sexes would develop a stronger sense of their continuity with people in general and their own ego development will be less traumatic. Feelings of frustration, ambivalence and anxiety will not be felt in relation to one (hated) person (mother) because of the absolute power of this person will be eliminated. The more people that care for children, the less will children have to be the extension of their parents (Charvet, 1982).

Shared childcare reduces the power of all people involved, and because the caretakers become less powerful the infant does not have to develop the very strong neurotic defences (in order to cope with the power of the caretaker) which it has to develop in mother monopolized childrearing. (32) "In any case, having children raised by the group tends to break down the ownership identification that parents have towards children. It also tends to free the adults involved. Children growing up in an extended family would have a larger, stronger emotional base. This is extremely important when attempting to raise children in a society that has a different and hostile set of values" (McKain and Mckain, 1978 : 250).

Mead demonstrated decades ago that girls and boys are made, not born. "If those temperamental attitudes which we have traditionally regarded as feminine - such as passivity, responsiveness, and willingness to cherish children - can so easily be set up as the masculine pattern in one tribe, and in another be outlawed for the majority of women as well as for the majority of men, we no longer have any basis for regarding such aspects of behaviour as sex-linked....

"The material suggests that we may say that many, if not all, of the personality traits which we have called masculine or feminine are as lightly linked to sex as are the clothing, the manners, and the form of head-dress that a society at a given period assigns to either sex...We are forced to conclude that human nature is almost unbelievably malleable, responding accurately and contrastingly to contrasting cultural conditions...Standardized personality differences between the sexes are of this order, cultural creations to which each generation, male and female, is trained to conform" (Mead, 1935 : 259-260, quoted by Rohrbaugh, 1981 :17).

Recent studies have revealed not only that gender differentiations are established in childhood, but that the mother-monopolized mode of childrearing produces gender inequality. (33) Furthermore, we are today able to make the link between the symbolic mode of epistemology and ontology established in childhood (which in itself is a symbolic mode of power/powerlessness/domination) and the dominant epistemology and ontology in society in general. The consequences of fear, frustration, ambivalence and anxiety experienced in childhood as a result of mother-monopolized childrearing and experienced in relation to the mother have an effect throughout our lives. Our inevitable neurotic response to our childhood experiences forms the base and prototype for our response to the world in general; it becomes our epistemology and ontology. The vicious circle of the domination ethic is never broken, always reproduced. A nonsexual division of

labour in shared parenting is a starting point for moving out of our patriarchal society. (34)

4.11 Notes and references

1. For Oakley "sex" refers to the biological differences between male and female; "the visible difference in genitalia, the related difference in procreative function" (Oakley, 1972 : 16). "Gender" on the other hand is "a matter of culture: it refers to the social classification into 'masculine' and 'feminine'" (Oakley, 1972 : 16). For Oakley it is important that the "constancy of sex must be admitted, but so also must the variability of gender" (Oakley, 1972 : 16).

According to Rosenberg and Sutton-Smith (1972), "By sex we mean the gender (male or female) with which the child is born" (Rosenberg and Sutton-Smith, quoted by Kessler, 1978 : 7). I agree with Kessler that: "If 'gender' and 'sex' mean different things, then they ought not to be used interchangeably; if they mean the same thing, then the cultural/biological distinction may be open to question" (Kessler, 1978 : 7).

2. For many authors the nature/nurture dichotomy is directly related to the sex/gender dichotomy. Sex and nature refer to innate properties, and nurture and gender to acquired properties (Tuana, 1983 : 625). The most prominent exponent of "sex/gender system" logic is Rubin. For Rubin every society is organized by a "sex/gender system", which involves systematic ways of dealing with sex, gender and babies. More specifically, the "sex/gender system" is "the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied" (Rubin, quoted by Flax, 1983 : 274). For Hartmann, we label our present "sex/gender system" "patriarchy" because patriarchy "appropriately captures the notions of hierarchy and male [men] dominance which we see as central to the present system" (Hartmann, 1980 : 29).

For Thorne, "Kinship and family organization form the core of a given society's sex/gender system. The specifics vary cross- culturally and historically, but the sex/gender system includes: (i) The social creation of two dichotomous genders from biological sex.

This involves an exaggeration of differences - or a suppression of similarities - between women and men. (ii) A particular sexual division of labour. Although the specifics vary, all societies allocate at least some tasks by sex, a practice that divides men and women, exacerbates differences, and makes men and women dependent on one another.

(iii) The social regulation of sexuality. Although there is wide cross cultural variation in the forms of sexuality prescribed or repressed, the sexual division of labour works against sexual arrangements other than those containing at least one woman and one man, and thereby enjoins heterosexual union (Thorne, 1982 : 8).

Although the "sex/gender system" is generally viewed as making a positive contribution to feminist theory, the dichotomy in itself is problematic to me. I agree with Tuana, who argues that "most participants in the debate, feminists and non-feminists alike, take for granted not only that the nature/nurture distinction is metaphysically acceptable, but also that the positing of two and only two sexes is ontologically correct. I hold that both of these assumptions must be critically examined" (Tuana, 1983 : 626).

For Delphy the "sex/gender system" of Rubin functions on the basic assumption that sex inevitably leads to gender. "In other words, the fact that humans reproduce sexually and that males and females look different contains within itself not only the capacity but also the necessity of a social division, albeit the so-

cial form varies greatly. The very existence of genders - of different social positions for men and women (or more correctly, for females and males) - is thus taken as given and as not requiring explanation. Only the content of these positions and their (eventual, according to Rubin) hierarchy are a matter for investigation. Those who, like me, took gender seriously find themselves today pretty isolated" (Delphy, 1984 : 25).

"Dichotomy - from the greek, a cutting in two. A division into two mutually exclusive classes having contradictory marks. One such dichotomy which I believe to be at the heart of a world view which is both oppressive to women and racist is the dichotomy between nature and nurture. In this paper, I will argue that this distinction is metaphysically linked to a cluster of dichotomies: sex/gender, male/female, essence/accident. I will begin by discussing some historical examples of the ways in which the nature/nurture dichotomy were employed to support biological determinism. I then attempt to uncover the metaphysical presuppositions underlying traditional versions of this dichotomy. At this point it becomes possible to illustrate the crucial relationship between the nature/nurture dichotomy and the sex/gender dichotomy. I then turn to alternative interpretations of the nature/nurture dichotomy, arguing that any interpretation which treats nature and nurture as dichotomous is an incorrect and, in our history, pernicious representation of the world. In the process of rejecting such interpretations an alternative view will unfold, a view which refuses this division.

"According to the tradition, all characteristics of human beings (and other living thing) are seen as a function of either nature or nurture. This dichotomy is at the root of numerous other dichotomies: biology/culture, innate/learned, inherent/acquired, genetic/environmental. The nature/nurture dichotomy has been part of the grounding of a variety of theories of biological determinism: that is, biology (nature) necessarily determines individual characteristics being seen as inherited,

as inborn. In addition, perceived variations between groups (races, sexes, the insane, criminals, etc.) are interpreted as the result of biological, inherited differences. This line of reasoning is extended to social structures arguing that particular social structures had their origins in the facts of biology, and were thus a reflection of biology" (Tuana, 1983 : 621).

Tuana argues that to reject the sex/gender dichotomy does not mean that no distinctions can or should be made. "It is only to deny that such distinctions are, so to speak, carved in our genes. Distinctions can be made, but they will be time, situation, and value relative. What will be a good distinction is then decided by whether or not it is useful to make such a distinction at that particular time in that particular situation. Such distinctions will not report 'biological facts'" (Tuana, 1983 : 631).

In this study I, like Delphy and Tuana, argue against the sex/gender dichotomy. However, I argue that this dichotomy is not based on the nature/nurture dichotomy, but that the latter in itself is socially created.

3. Freud's theory on babies' theories of birth and sexuality can be summarized as follows. First: the "omnipresent penis"; both boys and girls think that they (and the opposite sex) have a penis and the world is the baby, the baby is the world. Second: the "cloacal theory"; both men and women can give birth "men and women give each other a child and the baby makes the world)". Third: the "sadistic theory"; sexuality is a battle in which the stronger male is superior and the baby itself is excluded from the world.

The most important aspect central to all three theories is that all these notions are about the baby's relationship to itself. In this process of discovering itself the baby's auto eroticism is a physical expression of the psychological implications

of an attempt to establish an ego or own identity. Freud labels this psychological process "narcissism". The moment when the infant identifies with the image in the mirror is the first moment in which the infant comes to form an image of itself.

"Narcissus never believed that what he saw in the pond's mirror was himself, and because there was no one there to tell him where he got off, he died in love with himself as though he were another person. Narcissus was for ever grasping his shadow which was the object of his own desire, but what eluded him was himself: the mirror did not give him himself, because the only one in the world he had to tell him where he was, was Echo, the absolute other, to whom none could get attached because she would not listen and who did no more than repeat the words of Narcissus' own self-fascination. But no one could have done any more; for Narcissus is confined in intra-subjectivity" (Mitchell, 1974 : 38-39). (For Freud homosexuality is rooted in narcissism - the homosexual does not choose another person of the same sex, but rather him/herself in the guise of another.)

For our purpose the most important aspect of a narcissistic identification is the reality that the identity the infant constructs of itself is not a true recognition, but always a false one: the self is always like another. As Mitchell writes: "...this self is constructed of necessity in a state of alienation: the person first sees himself in another, mother or mirror" (Mitchell, 1974 : 40). However, in contemporary society this "mother or mirror" distinction is not made this clearly by the infant, because the mother is (as "only" caretaker) both mirror and not mirror at once. This problem of separate ego development will be discussed later.

For Freud, the primary narcissistic formulation is the base for secondary identity with other people. Because the narcissistic image is one of own perfection and

the reality (for Freud) that a person never gives up something once enjoyed, people thus become egocentric. The implication of this is that because "childhood love is boundless, it demands exclusive possession, it is not content with less than all" (Freud, 1977 : 178), all our relationships (assuming that human relationships are love relationships) will be characterized by jealousy and attempts at exclusive possession. If this goal is not reached people will be frustrated.

Thus, although Freud wrote, "A strong egoism is a protection against falling ill, but in the last resort we must begin to love in order not to fall ill. And we are bound to fall ill if in consequence of frustration, we are unable to love" (Freud, quoted by Mitchell, 1974 : 33), his own theoretical framework revealed the opposite - that ego development as it takes place in (known) society is problematic in itself. For this reason the oedipus complex both constitutes the fundamental mechanism in the development of the child and is the "nucleus of neurosis" (Freud, 1977 : 372).

"The closer one comes to the deeper disturbances of psychosexual development, the more unmistakable the importance of incestuous object-choice emerges. In psychoneurotics a large portion or the whole of their psychosexual activity in finding an object remains in the unconscious as a result of their repudiation of sexuality.

Girls with an exaggerated need for affection and an equally exaggerated horror of the real demands made by sexual life have an irresistible temptation on the one hand to realize the ideal of asexual love in their lives and on the other hand to conceal their libido behind an affection which they can express without self-reproaches, by holding fast throughout their lives to their infantile fondness revived at puberty, for their parents or brothers and sisters. Psychoanalysis has

no difficulty in showing persons of this kind that they are in love, in the everyday sense of the word, with those blood-relations of theirs; for, with the help of their symptoms and other manifestations of their illness, it traces their unconscious thoughts and translates them into conscious ones. In cases in which someone who has previously been healthy falls ill after an unhappy experience in love, it is also possible to show with certainty that the mechanism of his illness consists in a turning-back of his libido on to those whom he preferred in his infancy" (Freud, 1977 : 151).

4. According to Freud a baby born "in full sexuality" passes through four sequential stages. In the first three of these stages an erotogenic zone first dominates the child's experiences (of itself and others) and then later becomes dormant, but never completely "disappears". The stages are "oral", "anal", "phallic" and "latency" (an "innocent" child: a boy; a girl) (see Freud, 1977 : 97-110). For Freud the initiation of each stage has two characteristics: the deprivation of the self and a new awareness of the other.

According to Mitchell, "The third and phallic phase is initially as impervious to gender differences as the oral and anal phases, though it is within this area that Freud said the choice of recognition has to be made, the recognition that the phallic power of another is bigger and better than one's own: in the boy's case, that of the father, in the girl's, that of all men. In the reaction to the recognition, as we have seen, Freud located the diverse expression of the same shock: penis-envy for women and castration anxiety for men - in one, they want it, in the other they could lose what hopes they have. But sunk in narcissism and polymorphously perverse, the male at least takes himself for the model of the universe: everyone is constructed in the image he is finding of himself" (Mitchell, 1974 : 54).

5. Simon and Gagnon argue that retrospective interpretations of childhood experiences may be distorting. "...rather than the past determining the present it is possible that the present significantly reshapes the past, as we reconstruct our autobiographies in an effort to bring them into greater congruence with our present identities, roles and available vocabularies" (Simon and Gagnon, 1969 : 734).

6. The girl only becomes a "woman", according to Freud, insofar as she comes to desire her father, while the boy only becomes a "man" to the extent that he stops desiring his mother. Whereas the boy's break with his mother-fixation is contingent on the repression of any sexual love for a parent, the girl's overcoming of her mother- attachment is predicated on a transfer of sexual love from one parent to another.

"Unlike the case of the boy, then, the path of the girl to womanhood does not require that she ever leave the oedipal stage, and according to Freud, women never entirely do. To put this another way, they never really leave their family" (Balbus, 1982 : 175).

"In girls the motive for the demolition of the oedipus complex is lacking. Castration has already had its effect, which was to force the child into the situation of the oedipus complex" (Freud, 1977 : 342).

7. "After a woman has become aware of the wound to her narcissism, she develops, like a scar, a sense of inferiority. When she has passed beyond her first attempt at explaining her lack of a penis as being a punishment personal to herself and has realized that the sexual character is an universal one, she begins to share the contempt felt by men for a sex which is the lesser in so important a

respect, and, at least in holding that opinion, insists on being like a man" (Freud, 1977 : 337).

"When the little girl discovers her own deficiency, from seeing a male genital, it is only with hesitation and reluctance that she accepts the unwelcome knowledge. As we have seen, she clings obstinately to the expectation of one day having a genital of the same kind too, and her wish for it survives long after hope has expired. The child invariably regards castration in the first instance as a misfortune peculiar to herself; only later does she realize that it extends to certain other children and lastly to certain grown-ups. When she comes to understand the general nature of this characteristic, it follows that femaleness - and with it, of course, her mother - suffers a great depreciation in her eyes" (Freud, 1977 : 380).

Many authors have argued against the existence of penis envy. Nevertheless, even if we "accept" the existence of penis envy several feminists have convincingly argued that it is present not because of any perceived physical or sexual superiority, but because it symbolizes social power (and social privilege): no phallus, no power. (See Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 50-51 for a discussion on penis envy in relation to the separation between men and women within capitalism.)

For Chodorow penis envy is the symbolic expression of another desire: "Women do not wish to become men, but want to detach themselves from the mother and become complete, autonomous women" (Chodorow, 1978 : 123).

A third interesting point can be made about the concept within freudian theory. In *Civilisation and its Discontents* Freud wrote, "The first stage is easy. We recognize as cultural all activities and resources which are useful to men for making

the earth serviceable to them, for protecting them against the violence of the forces of nature, and so on. As regards this side of civilization, there can be scarcely any doubt. If we go back far enough, we find that the first acts of civilization were the use of tools, the gaining of control over fire and the construction of dwellings. Among these, the control over fire stands out as a quite extraordinary and unexampled achievement, while others opened up paths which man has followed ever since, and the stimulus to which is easily guessed" (Freud, 1985 : 278-279).

But how was control over fire discovered? Freud answers this question on the same page: "Psychoanalytic material, incomplete as it is and not susceptible to clear interpretation, nevertheless admits of a conjecture - a fantastic-sounding one - about the origin of this human feat. It is as though primal man had the habit, when he came in contact with fire, of satisfying an infantile desire connected with it, by putting it out with a stream of his urine. The legends that we possess leave no doubt about the originally phallic view taken of tongues of flame as they shoot upwards. Putting out fire by micturating - a theme to which modern giants, Gulliver in Lilliput and Rabelais' Gargantua, still hark back - was therefore a kind of sexual act with a male, an enjoyment of sexual potency in a homosexual competition. The first person to renounce this desire and spare the fire was able to carry it off with him and subdue it to his own use. By clamping down the fire of his own sexual excitation, he had tamed the natural force of fire. This great cultural conquest was thus the regard for his renunciation of instinct. Further, it is as though woman had been appointed guardian of the fire which was held captive on the domestic hearth, because her anatomy made it impossible for her to yield to the temptation of this desire. It is remarkable, too, how regularly analytic experience testifies to the connection between ambition, fire and urethral eroticism" (Freud, 1985 : 278-279).

This theory puts a new dimension on freudian penis envy. Although this is a very good (freudian: "anatomy is destiny") example of how women were "anatomically" disqualified from contributing to the development of civilization (through exclusion from the advancement of knowledge), the implications of this theory for freudian penis envy are even more important. It was the visible penis itself that made the single most important contribution to the development of civilization itself. How can women not, when they see this organ, immediately feel envy? The psychological impact of this notion on Freud's development of his theory of penis envy cannot be overestimated. We can thus not simply dismiss this theory as absurd, we must incorporate it into freudian theory to understand the psychological base of freudian theory itself better.

Finally, for Freud penis envy prepares the way for the clitoral- vaginal transference (which is crucial for the development of normal femininity). Today we know that physiologically such a transference is a myth. Orgasms are not vaginally but clitorally centred (Masters and Johnson, 1966 : 6). Furthermore, biologically the clitoris cannot be an atrophied penis.

8. "She gives up her wish for a penis and puts in place of it a wish for a child: and with that purpose in view she takes her father as a love-object. Her mother becomes the object of her jealousy. The girl has turned into a little woman" (Freud, 1977 : 340).

9. Two issues are important here. First, that the attempted synthesis between marxism and freudian^{theory} is inherently problematic. This attempted synthesis originated when marxist theory in itself "proved" to be inadequate in explaining social reality. Consequently, many neo marxists turned to Freud for some theoretical help. The best known exponents of this "direction" in neo marxist theory are the theorists of the Frankfurt School (especially Marcuse, Fromm,

Adorno, Horkheimer and Habermas) and Reich (who was "sympathetic" to neo marxist theory).

The reason for the attempts to incorporate Freud into neo marxism are summarized by Balbus: "Freud offers us then a way of understanding the psychic roots, and thus the tenacity, of contemporary patriarchy that is lacking in Marx. At the same time, Freud's claim that oedipal struggle for sexual recognition is co-extensive with civilization enables him to shed light on the problem of why all modes of production have thus far been patriarchal and thus purports to remedy the inability of the marxist concept of the mode of production to illuminate this problem" (Balbus, 1982 : 177-178). We can thus say that these theorists turned to an attempted integration of Marx and Freud in order to explore the very question about the relation between the individual and society (see Held, 1980 : 110).

Where marxist-feminists tried to incorporate Freud in their analysis they basically tried to historicise Freud. In other words, they tried to show that Freud's psychoanalysis is not "a recommendation for a patriarchal society, but an analysis of one" (Mitchell, 1974 : xv). The conditions which produce a patriarchal society are then not inevitable but rather historically contingent. For this purpose they use the historic analytic method developed by Marx, but with the incorporation of neo freudian concepts. The most important exponents of this freudo-marxist theory are Mitchell, Rubin and Zaretsky. For Rubin, "Psychoanalysis provides a description of the mechanism by which the sexes are divided and deformed, of how bisexual androgynous infants are transformed into boys and girls. Psychoanalysis is a feminist theory manqué" (Rubin, 1978 : 151).

The main problem of freudo-marxist theory can be summarized as follows (for detailed discussions see Balbus, 1982 : 169-196 and Hartmann, 1980). As marxists these feminists all work with a definition of patriarchy as male dominated

"sexual" [gender] division of labour. As a direct consequence they thus have to give patriarchy a material base in the relation between men's and women's labour power. Although for different reasons, none of them succeeded in doing this.

The second important issue relevant to this section is raised by Judith Arcana.

"Freud's theory took no social or political elements into account. If he really did find sexual desire for mothers in young boys, he found it in young boys of middle- and upper-class European nuclear patriarchal families of the late nineteenth century. Such findings would have to be studied in terms of the dependence of male children on their mothers, the high social value of male children and resultant status of their mothers, sexrole definitions, the climate of heavily repressed sexuality at the time, and so forth. Moreover, the 'finding' itself is open to question and interpretation, especially given Freud's deliberate distortion of his own data about girls who were incest-rape victims (see F. Rush's *The Best Kept Secret*).

"In our time, also, such considerations as emotional dependence and the power dynamics of the family must be analyzed in social and political terms. For instance, the fact that small boys (and small girls, for that matter) have intimate and prolonged physical and emotional relations with their mothers rather than their fathers is surely explained for the most part by the fact that almost no fathers give care/nurturance to children in this culture. Small boys rarely spend their time talking to their fathers, much less touching them, confiding in them, or exchanging ideas with them. Many children hardly know their fathers as actual people until they are ten or twelve years old - if then. Fathers continue to be remote and associated with discipline or impersonal power.

"Moreover, in both Freud's day and ours, the image of woman is that of an object, a thing to be used by males for the satisfaction of their sexual (and other) needs. At the same time, of course, despite obvious everyday reality, the image of mother is the personification of home and security - a boundless source of love, care support, admiration, etc. Out of their rapidly developing sense of the masculinity society expects of them, and their own real needs, little boys may turn easily to their mothers - rather than fathers - for warmth of feeling and intimate relationship, only to find, as adults, that this turning has been understood as the "fixation" Freud suggested" (Arcana, 1983 : 208).

10. Since all children are mothered, a girl's gender role identification is a continuous process, while that of a boy is not. As a consequence the "gender identity problems" a young boy experiences are very different and for that matter much more difficult (total transformation of himself/his "gender") than those of a young girl. But once the boy has completed this "change" he has not only established his gender but also his own separate ego. For the little girl growing up this is different as she does not establish a strong separate ego. The "gender identity problems" (what is a man/woman?) are thus not only different in nature for men and women but also different in origin, for men because of the changes he "had" to "make" and for women because they never made the same kind of changes.

11. Although I do work with the question "How do women come to mother?" in the text, the following ideas contribute to the logic of my argument. My basic assumption is that the base line of all social structures is that people unconsciously reproduce the same structures that produced them as social beings. For this reason the social structures of mothering carry within themselves the capacity for their own reproduction. The absolute dependence of the infant may lead us to forget that it is not only the child that is "created" (by meeting its needs, creating new ones, meeting them - or failing to meet some needs), but to a certain extent

the caretakers themselves are "created" by the infant as well (see Giddens, 1979 : 130). This vice versa relationship is the result of the reality that infants are not only reproduced, but that in this process of reproduction some physiological needs and frustrations are "created" by the very process itself.

The reality that women were themselves mothered by women means that they grow up with relational capacities and needs and a psychological definition of self-in-relationship-to-others which in turn "commits" them to mothering. For men the opposite is true. "The sexual [gender] and familial division of labour in which women mother and are more involved in interpersonal, affective relationships than men produces in daughters and sons a division of psychological capacities which leads them to reproduce this sexual [gender] and familial division of labour" (Evans, 1982 : 89).

For Chodorow the mother-child relationship recreates the basic relational constellation in the mother as the exclusive symbiotic mother-child relationship of a mother's own infancy reappears. For Chodorow all people who have been mothered want to recreate this relation (Chodorow, 1978 : 201). This means that "the different structures of the feminine and masculine oedipal triangle and process of oedipal experience that results from women's mothering contributes further to gender personality differentiation and the reproduction of women's mothering. As a result of this experience, women's inner-object world, and the affects and issues associated with it, are more actively sustained and more complex than men's. This means that women define and experience themselves relationally. Their heterosexual orientation is always in internal dialogue with both oedipal and pre-oedipal mother-child relational issues. Thus women's heterosexuality is triangular and requires a third person - a child - for its structural and emotional completion. For men, by contrast, the heterosexual relationship alone recreates the early bond to their mother; a child interrupts it. Men,

moreover, do not define themselves in relationship and have come to suppress relational capacities and repress relational needs. This prepares them to participate in the affect-denying world of alienated work, but not to fulfill women's needs for intimacy and primary relationships" (Chodorow, 1978 : 207).

Another contribution to the question "How do women come to mother?" is made by Harlow. "If we can extrapolate from Harlow's studies, we can conclude that mothering capacities and behavior in any individual higher primate presuppose particular developmental experiences. Harlow studied mothering behaviour in 'unmothered' monkeys - monkeys who had been raised in a wire cage or with a cloth surrogate, but without their mother. He found them to range from extremely abusive to marginally adequate mothers for their first child. Those who were in the marginally adequate category had had some social experience, either at around one year or as a preadolescent and adolescent. We cannot infer definite conclusions about humans from Harlow's work. But Harlow's studies do imply that even if female hormones are called up during pregnancy and parturition, these are not enough to generate mothering capacities or cause mothering" (Chodorow, 1978 : 28).

For French, "Female animals who were deprived of their own mothers do not mother their babies but abuse and sometimes even kill them. If a female baby rat is removed from her mother just after birth, before the mother has licked the offspring clean, that the baby will not as a new mother, lick her own offspring clean" (French, 1985 : 532).

12. For Chodorow the relationship between father and child occurs largely as fantasy and idealization. This is in contrast to the relationship with the mother which is grounded in reality (Chodorow, 1978 : 195). For Balbus; "Because the father is a distant, often absent figure, the identification that the male child estab-

lishes with him is 'positional', rather than 'personal' (Slater); the male child identifies only with the abstract role that the father fulfills in the world and thus does not transfer his pre-oedipal love from his mother to him" (Balbus, 1982 : 309).

The relationship between child and father is, as a result of the above, characterized by the child experiencing the father as a separate being. Consequently, "it is very much in the nature of things when the father expresses his own interests" (Chodorow, 1978 : 79).

According to Dinnerstein, "A father can be quite tyrannical, then, and still be felt as in some sense a refreshing presence. His power is more distinct and clearly defined than the mother's, his wisdom less eerily clairvoyant. Because he is a creature more separate from ourselves, our resentment of him is less deeply tinged with anxiety and guilt. And our love for him, like our anger at him, lies outside the shadowy maternal realm from which all children, to grow up, must escape" (Dinnerstein, 1977 : 176).

As in many other sections, my basic assumption in this section is that in a mother-monopolized childrearing system the mother-child relation is the prototype of all relations in society. My central concern within this system is domination. I see fear as the single most important phenomenon in a system of domination. But I do not see domination as a result of the fear the infant experiences for the real authority of the father, or that this fear serves as the base for authoritarian political commitments (as many neo marxists argue). I thus do not see domination as a reaction against the authority of the father. The absent father is indeed absent from the narcissistic world of the infant; he is not real enough to the infant. In other words, the infant does not struggle with the father for the formation of its own selfhood. The father (even within a patriarchal cul-

ture) is not important enough (as result of mother monopolized childrearing) to the infant. For these reasons I agree with Balbus, who states that "political domination is not an escape from freedom anymore than it is merely a reaction to the power of the father, it is, rather, an escape from the 'tyranny' of the mother" (Balbus, 1982 : 325).

13. "...the mother does not recognize or deny the existence of the daughter as a separate person, and the daughter herself then comes not to recognize, or to have difficulty recognizing, herself as a separate person. She experiences herself, rather, as a continuation or extension of her mother in particular, and later of the world in general" (Chodorow, 1978 : 103).

"The different length and quality of the pre-oedipal period in boys and girls are rooted in women's mothering, specifically in the fact that a mother is of the same gender as her daughter and of a different gender from her son. This leads to her experiencing and treating them differently. I do not mean this as a biological claim. I am using gender here to send for the mother's particular psychic structure and relational sense, for her (probable) heterosexuality, and for her conscious and unconscious acceptance of the ideology, meanings, and expectations that go into being a gender member of our society and understanding what gender means. Being a grown woman and mother also means having been the daughter of a mother, which affects the nature of her motherliness and quality of her mothering" (Chodorow, 1978 : 98).

14. Flax formulates the social function of "separation" and "individuation" as follows. "Separation means establishing a firm sense of differentiation from the mother of possessing one's own physical and mental boundaries. Individuation means establishing a range of characteristics, skills and personality traits which are uniquely one's own. Separation and individuation are the two "traits"

of development; they are not identical, but they can reinforce or impede each other" (Flax, 1983 : 251).

15. Girls do experience themselves as less separate than boys, because they are mothered by women. Defining yourself as less separate also means defining yourself more in relation to others than to yourself.

16. "Women's biosexual experiences (menstruation, coitus, pregnancy, childbirth, lactation) all involve some challenge to the boundaries of her ego ("me"/"not-me" in relation to her blood or milk, to a man who penetrates her, to a child once part of her body). These are important and fundamental human experiences that are probably intrinsically meaningful and at the same time complicated for women everywhere. However, a western woman's tenuous sense of individuation and of the firmness of her ego boundaries increases the likelihood that experiences challenging these boundaries will be difficult for her and conflictive. Nor is it clear that this personality structure is 'functional' for society as a whole. The evidence presented in this paper suggests that satisfactory mothering, which does not reproduce particular psychological problems in boys and girls, comes from a person with a firm sense of self, of her own value, whose care is a freely chosen activity rather than a reflection of a conscious and unconscious sense of inescapable connection to and responsibility for her children" (Chodorow, 1971 : 59-60).

17. "Most women emerge from their oedipus complex oriented to their father and men as primary erotic objects but it is clear that men tend to remain emotionally secondary, or at most emotionally equal, compared to the primacy and exclusivity of an oedipal boy's emotional tie to his mother and women" (Chodorow, 1978 : 193).

18. For Chodorow, "the wants and needs which lead women to become mothers put them in situations where their mothering capacities can be expressed. At the same time, women remain in conflict with their internal mother and often their real mother as well. The pre-occupation with issues of separation and primary identification, the ability to recall their early relationship to their mother - precisely those capacities which enable mothering - are also those which may lead to over-identification and pseudoempathy based on maternal projection rather than any real perception or understanding of their infant's needs. Similarly, the need for primary relationships becomes more prominent and weighted as relationships to other women become less possible and as father/husband absence grows. Though women come to mother and to be mothers, the very capacities and commitments for mothering can be in contradiction one with the other and within themselves.

Capacities which enable mothering are also precisely those which can make mothering problematic" (Chodorow, 1978 : 205).

19. The denial of dependency, attachment and identification makes masculine gender role training more rigid. "A boy represses those qualities he takes to be feminine inside himself, and rejects and devalues [patronises] women and whatever he considers to be feminine in the social world" (Chodorow, 1978 : 181). The same idea is formulated in more popular fashion by French: "Men are men because they don't cry, don't feel, don't need. Like Henry Moore's sculptures, much of their greatness consists of a hole" (French, 1985 : 290).

20. The "child-wish" as an attempt to "turn the tables" on the mother and by so doing develop a self-esteem (in which the woman is not the helpless partner in the narcissistic relationship, but vice versa) cannot be overestimated. (For a discussion of women's problems with developing a self-esteem see 4.6.2 above).

21. De Beauvoir wrote, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine. Only the intervention of someone else can establish an individual as an other" (De Beauvoir, 1953 :295).

The assignment of the role of the "other" to women is an example of the objectification of women. The objectification and consequently, under-personification of women leads to women becoming a kind of borderline between the inanimate and the conscious. "She" thus becomes not only a woman, but anything that is half-seriously personified. For Dworkin, "men are able to be objective, an exalted capacity, precisely because they are not objects, To be objective means that one knows the world, sees it as it is, acts on the objects in it appropriately. Objectivity by definition requires a capacity to know, an ability to see. Women, the logs at issue, cannot be objective or act objectively because objects do not see or know. A log does not cognize. A log is what it is - a log. A log that resists being rolled is a log that does not know its nature or its place. A log that resists being rolled by definition is not a log. A woman who resists being a log is by definition not a woman" (Dworkin, 1981 : 108).

For Marx there is (although formulated by him in a different sphere) a fundamental link between alienation and objectification. "The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power of its own confronting him; it means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien" (Marx, quoted by Lever, 1982 : 15). Within the social system of mother

monopolized childrearing the link with alienation is made (in particular) by De Beauvoir (1953) and Dinnerstein (1977).

22. This social process is formulated as follows by Balbus. "The 'rape' of nature that contemporary ecologists decry, then, is no mere metaphor, but accurately captures the unconscious, incestuous psychological underpinnings of the contemporary exploitation of the ecosystem. Now we are in a position fully to understand what Marcuse intimated but could not adequately illuminate, namely the sense in which the 'performance principle' is a 'male principle' and the domination of nature is part and parcel of 'patriarchal culture'. Objectification is a patriarchal, or male principle because it both expresses and is rooted in the same condition that guarantees the domination of men over women, namely mother monopolized childrearing. It follows that both marxism, for which objectification is the essential human activity, and neo-marxism, for which objectification is an essential human activity, are inherently patriarchal modes of thought" (Balbus, 1982 : 336).

"The intense ambivalence toward the mother that is the inevitable corollary of the dialectic of identification-separation-individuation will be projected onto nature: 'she' is both the mother that we love and on whom we wish to remain dependent and the mother that we hate because this wish cannot be fulfilled. Thus our love-hate relationship with our mother becomes a love-hate relationship with nature; nature will be symbolized both as the loving woman to whom we owe our life and as the dreaded, hated woman who must be dominated or even destroyed" (Balbus, 1982 : 335).

23. According to Bronfenbrenner there is a difference in the socialisation of "boys" and "girls" in relation to their relationship with nature. "With sons, socialisation seems to be focused primarily on directing and constraining the

boy's impact on the environment. With daughters the aim is rather to protect the girl from the impact of environment. The boy is being prepared to mould his world, the girl to be moulded by it" (Bronfenbrenner, quoted by Freeman, quoted by Hunt, 1980 : 10).

24. For Rapp, the family as an ideological construction is extremely important to poor people (Rapp, 1978 : 294). However, in poor communities one usually finds an extended and not a nuclear family unit. According to Greer, "the extended family is in many ways a boring and oppressive environment, but it does offer a sense and a context to mothering which two-bedroomed villas in the suburbs do not" (Greer, 1983 : 23).

In South Africa the group areas act and the removals that were the result of this law, fundamentally changed the role and function of the family of those affected. "Between 1950 and 1982 nearly 700 000 people were to be evicted from their homes in terms of the group areas act. But the tragedy of the removals cannot be gauged in numbers alone. In the older areas, most of these people lived within the matrix of communal families and long-established relationships. From here they were fairly arbitrarily selected by officialdom to be settled in the only accommodation available in the new townships: nuclear-family apartments. Community structures simply fell apart" (Pinnock in Davis and Slabbert, 1985 : 21).

25. "We must include the oppression of children in any program for feminist revolution or we will be subject to the same failing of which we have so often accused men: of not having gone deep enough in our analysis, of having missed an important substratum of oppression merely because it didn't directly concern us" (Firestone, 1979 : 16).

26. In some countries (for example China) there are attempts to change this attitude. According to Itty Chan, "the Chinese aim is to help the child to develop as a thinking, feeling, involved social being who is dependent and cooperative and who can assume responsibility actively and participate in and contribute to the progress and continuing development of the society. There is a clear and direct connection between child rearing and the larger society and in turn the explicitly defined goals of both contribute to social cohesion and consistency.

"There is a crucial concept in understanding the Chinese viewpoint on child development. In the west, when we talk about child development we refer to the development of the 'individual self', the child's sense of who he or she is and what he or she can do. In America little children can often be heard saying 'I am smart' or 'this is mine' or 'I can run faster' or even 'I want to 'share' alone!' In China the focus is upon the 'social self' - the child's sense of who he or she is in relation to other people and their relationship in society. This might sound like what we know as social development, but it is not merely learning to get along with others or, as an American preschool teacher recently said, learning 'to deal with others'. Rather it is the sense of self as being an integral, intimate part of the group, an insider" (Chan, 1979 : 62- 63).

27. Not only does the need for their labour define women's role in the family (and the latter role: the role model to which all other roles within a capitalist mode of production refers to) but this need also exercises a certain restraint on the direct exploitation of women's labour in the industrial mode. For Rowbotham, "...women's social usefulness was never recognized or recompensed. Instead their dependence on the male breadwinner and their work in the family

reduced their capacity to organize. They were thus placed at a double disadvantage" (Rowbotham, 1973 : 58, in Mackie and Pattullo, 1977 : 18).

28. "However, if we can compare the standard of living to which a woman can aspire if she remains single, and the standard which she can reasonably expect from being married, it seems certain that relative economic deprivation will be experienced by single women as time goes on. We are confronted with a paradox: on the one hand marriage is the (institutional) situation where women are exploited; on the other hand, precisely because of this, the potential market situation for women's labour [which is that of all women, not just those who are actually married - see Barron and Norris, 1976] is such that marriage still offers them the best career, economically speaking" (Delphy, 1984 : 97).

29. "The divorce law means nothing but that society, in principle, allows divorce. But is it ready to create those economic conditions which make it possible for the woman to actually effect it?" (Reich, quoted by Mitchell, 1974 : 198).

30. Nevertheless, despite this reality (of exploitation), power in childrearing is the only power most women have. To just "reduce" this power by breaking down the social cult of maternity (in other words; women's power within a specific sphere of the domestic mode of production) and "replacing" it with the "shared parenting" concept, without restructuring the domestic and industrial modes of production and reproduction to the extent that there will be a material force behind the concept of equal opportunities, will be detrimental to women. Thus, although mother monopolized childrearing is an extremely important foundation to patriarchy, it cannot be removed in isolation (in other words; within the system of patriarchy). It is thus not only the mode of childrearing within the domestic mode of reproduction and production that must be changed but the

total structure of the domestic and industrial modes of reproduction and production . If we thus look at "shared parenting", we must keep in mind that it is seen as an important part of a whole system of structural changes that is needed to bring about fundamental change and the destruction of patriarchy.

Along the same line of thought one can argue that within the current social and political context the absolute personal power of the mother, as a mother, is in direct contrast to the social and political powerlessness of the mother as a mother. For this reason many feminists argue that women should not try to get men more involved in childrearing but should rather strive to take total control.

31. "Thus nature, as the representative of both parents, will no longer be symbolized as a parent that must be punished. Shared parenting, in other words, undermines the unconscious emotional basis of the domination of nature, tipping the balance for both sexes in favour of 'solicitous impulses' toward nature. Now that the symbolization of nature is no longer poisoned by venomous hatred for the mother, our inevitable libidinal relationship with it can become a joyful, erotic rather than violent, rapacious relationship. And, as we come to embrace the nature outside us, we come also to love the nature within us, i.e., to delight in, rather than repress, our bodies. Under these conditions, the split between work and play is overcome and enterprise is transformed into an intrinsically pleasurable activity as well as one that 'can console us, though only in part, for the inexorable loss of our pure infant sense of omnipotent oneness with the world' (Dinnerstein, 1977 : 145).

32. The reduction of the authority of men in shared parenting is formulated as follows by Rosaldo. "When a man is involved in domestic labour, in child care and cooking, he cannot establish an aura of authority and distance" (Rosaldo, 1974 : 39). "Distance permits men to manipulate their social environment, to

stand apart from intimate interaction, and, accordingly, to control it as they wish. Because men can be separate they can be sacred; and by avoiding certain sorts of intimacy and unmediated involvement, they can develop an image and mantle of integrity and worth" (Rosaldo, 1974 : 27).

33. The mother-monopolized mode of childrearing does not only constitute some women as mothers, but involves a total fusion of gender functions. For this reason the question asked by Edholm, Harris and Young: "Why are childless women so rarely freed from the specificity of their gender role?" (Edholm, Harris and Young, 1977 : 123), is a very valid one.

Within my framework women are not exploited because they bear or mother children. Their mothering is a symptom of the appropriation of their labour in the first place. In other words, mothering itself does not explain the appropriation of women's labour, but it is the appropriation of their labour that constitutes them as exploited workers (and thus as exploited mothers). Rather than the mothering by the mother, it is the fact that both the sexes were reared in a system that establishes a general socio-political system in which men appropriate the labour power of women; this is my central concern.

"The general function of the family is the reproduction of the social relations of production. It needs to be insisted that 'reproduction' is only minimally biological. Procreation is therefore only one aspect of the family's function. Of much greater importance is the process of socialization including learning gender that goes on within the family, and servicing of the labour force.

"Individuals are born into social classes, but they are socialized into their class position. Thus working class boys learn to accept as natural a lifetime as adjuncts to the male" (Hunt, 1980 : 9).

34. I must emphasise that I am not working with shared parenting as a value in itself. Shared parenting taking place within a system characterized by the sexual division of labour will have little influence on patriarchy (male-dominated sexual division of labour). The kind of shared parenting I am referring to is shared parenting in a system where the sexual division of labour itself has been abolished. For this to be carried out we must obviously look at social transformation in which the (classic) distinction between exchange value and use value itself will be abolished. Powerful men (as they are ~~at~~ the moment) will not (because of their power) produce socially devalued use values instead of socially valued exchange values out of free will.

This again shows that we cannot establish shared parenting in isolation (or bring about drastic/fundamental changes only within the domestic mode of production) - we must look at the complete system of the mode of production. The same idea is formulated from a different angle by Hartsock: "Thus, I am not suggesting that shared parenting arrangements can abolish the sexual division of labour. Doing away with this division of labour would of course require institutionalizing the participation of both women and men in childrearing; but just as the rational and conscious control of the production of goods and services requires a vast and far-reaching social transformation, so the rational and conscious organization of reproduction would entail the transformation both of every human relation, and of human relations to the natural world. The magnitude of the task is apparent if one asks what a society without institutionalized gender differences might look like" (Hartsock, 1983 : 304).

CHAPTER 5

LABOUR

5.1 Problem synopsis

In this chapter I intend to focus on "labour" and its interaction (within the structural framework of a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society) with "gender". I shall first define the social dynamics of "labour" and then analyse the contribution of anthropology to our understanding of the gender divisions of labour. I shall then clarify and critically assess the concepts "labour power", "exchange value", "use value" and "surplus value" and their specific interaction within a materialist research tradition. Finally I shall analyse the interaction of the above concepts with "gender".

5.2 Labour

"The whole of so-called world history is nothing but the production of human beings by human labour" (Marx, quoted by Giddens, 1971 : 19).

For Marx human beings are natural creatures who differ from other animals because they are able to perform creative labour (see note 1, chapter 1). The way in which people express their lives coincides with "what" they produce and "how" they produce it. "The nature of individuals ... depends on the material conditions determining their production" (Marx and Engels, 1977 : 161). Human beings thus perceive themselves as human beings through their labour. In a class society this realization of one's humanity through labour is restricted by the appropriation of some of the proletariat's labour, and thus humanity, by the bourgeoisie. In this process of dehumanization the proletariat is therefore alienated from its own humanity.

Labour "creates" human beings not only as individuals but also as social beings. For marxists "labour" is the basis and the "connective tissue" of human society (Hildeering, 1978 : 86). For this reason the mode of production (method of organizing labour) determines the general character of social life. Labour is a social phenomenon, and as such constitutes a process in which the individual takes part not as an isolated individual but as a member of a specific socially organized labour structure. For Marcuse, "it is not the single, isolated individual who is active in this process. All labour is within the sphere of community: it is social, always 'with and for others'. Hence, the world is always a social world and, as such, a historical reality. The given and pre-established is the medium and means for all acts of labour and appropriation" (Marcuse, quoted by Held, 1980 : 235).

The interaction between "labour" and "society" is a dialectic process within which the structures of society are simultaneously produced and reproduced. "Every pre-condition of the social production process is at the same time its result, and every one of its results appears simultaneously as its pre-condition. All the production relations within which the process moves are therefore just as much its products as they are its conditions" (Marx, quoted by Larrain, 1983 : 144). Not only is labour thus the single most important act in the creation and continuation of a society, but the social organization of labour in itself determines social life independent of the individual's will. For this reason, the system of political economy does not only produce the individual as labour power that is sold and/or exchanged, but also produces the very conception of labour power as the fundamental human potential (Baudrillard in Nicolson, 1986 : 167).

5.3 Anthropology

In this section I shall assess the contribution of anthropology to our understanding of the gender division of labour.(1)

Until Lévi-Strauss published *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* in 1949, most anthropologists supported the functionalist view of Malinowski (1926) in working with the concept of reciprocity. According to Malinowski, the useful function of reciprocity explains its universal acceptance. Comparative studies, however, showed that functionality is in itself a social construction and consequently varies from society to society. A functionalist approach can also not explain the causal imbalance of reciprocity in most societies (Van Baal, 1975 : 30).

In an attempt to incorporate the unique social dynamics of different societies into an anthropological analysis, Mauss broke away from the functionalist paradigm. For him the fundamental question to be answered in an anthropological analysis is why pacts are (and should be) formed and kept. In answering this question the specific social importance of giving and receiving as well as the reciprocating of gifts are important, since they (for Mauss) dominate social organization. Within this paradigm the circulation of various resources (food, rituals, tools, etc.) in exchange forms the basis of social interaction. "Your own mother, your own sister, your own pigs, your own yams that you have piled up, you may not eat. Other people's sisters, other people's pigs, other people's yams that they have piled up, you may eat" (Arapesh, quoted by Lévi-Strauss, 1969 : 27).

The notion of "gift exchange" was incorporated by Lévi-Strauss in his structuralist anthropology. Lévi-Strauss's structuralist anthropology with its notion of "society as communication" is based on linguistic theory. It is primarily concerned with an analysis of the structures of the human mind. Language is a

central phenomenon in this analysis. For Lévi-Strauss, gift exchange is not essentially organized in direct relation to economic advantages, but rather to ends with a more social nature, for example, the acquisition of power.

For Lévi-Strauss, exchange is the fundamental social act; and the exchange of women is the archetype of all exchange. Women are the "valuables par excellence from both the biological and the social points of view, without which life is impossible, or at best, reduced to the worst forms of abjection" (Lévi- Strauss, quoted by Young and Harris, 1982 : 456).

The creation of kinship ties (formed for Lévi-Strauss by marrying "out") is the pre condition for the creation of society ("culture began with the exchange of women"). Through these kinship ties, bonds of reciprocal exchange are then established. The gift of a woman is more important than other gifts, because the relationship established through the exchange of women is not just one of reciprocity but one of kinship. "Two people may meet in friendship and exchange gifts, and yet quarrel and fight in later times, but intermarriage connects them in a permanent manner" (Best, quoted by Lévi-Strauss, 1969 : 481).

The "reality" that in human society it is "the men who exchange the women and not vice versa" (Lévi-Strauss, 1963 : 45) is of fundamental importance for Lévi-Strauss. This exchange is not carried out by individual men but by men as part of groups of men.

Marriage itself may be between two individuals. It is, nevertheless, primarily the establishment of kinship ties that is important - marriage is always a social institution and as such part of the social structure of a society. "The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a woman, but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as

one of the objects in the exchange, not as one of the partners" (Lévi-Strauss, 1969 : 115).

As, for Lévi-Strauss, the exchange of women is the mechanism that enforces interdependence of families (kinship ties), the gender division of labour enforces "a reciprocal state of dependence between the sexes [genders]" (Lévi-Strauss in Shapiro, 1971 : 348). The gender division of labour is thus "a device to make the sexes [genders] mutually dependent on social and economic grounds, thus establishing clearly that marriage is better than celibacy...the principle of sexual [gender] dependency between the sexes [genders], compelling them thereby to perpetuate themselves and found a family" (Lévi-Strauss, 1978 : 35). (2)

Two phenomena are of major importance in Lévi-Strauss' theory of the gender division of labour. One is the fact that the gender division of labour is universal and the other is that, despite its universal existence, the exact division of tasks by gender varies enormously. "The very fact that the sexual [gender] division of labour varies endlessly according to the society selected for consideration, shows that...it is the mere fact of its existence which is mysteriously required, the form under which it comes to exist being utterly irrelevant, at least from the point of view of any natural necessity...the sexual [gender] division of labour is nothing else than a device to institute a reciprocal state of dependency between the sexes" (Lévi-Strauss in Shapiro, 1971 : 347- 348).

I have two fundamental problems with Lévi-Strauss' structural functionalism. One is that he fails to explain the transformation from sex to gender. Mere descriptions of kinship systems cannot explain the mechanism by which gender identity is established, as kinship ties are already a result of a society structured by gender, and not vice versa. In other words; while it is possible (at least in

theory) to have a society with established gender identities without kinship, it is surely impossible to have kinship without established gender identities.

The other, interconnected with Lévi-Strauss's inadequate theory of the social construction of gender, is his ability to explain why the gender division of labour (while characterized by reciprocity and mutual dependence) is indeed hierarchical (see Hartmann, 1979 : 206-247). The only reason Lévi-Strauss supplies is the reality (for him) that it is men who exchange women and not the other way round. For him this exchange is located in the conceptualizing capacity of the human psyche and the deep structures of language. His implicit use of Freudian theory (see 4.4.1 above) severely restricts his analysis (see Young and Harris, 1982 : 457).

Lévi-Strauss's hypothesis on the universal existence of the gender division of labour that is nevertheless characterized by enormous variations between societies formed the basis over the past forty years of many studies on the gender division of labour. Lévi-Strauss fails to explain why the gender division of labour is characterized by a gender-dependent relationship in which men occupy a superordinate position and women one of subordinate dependence. In an attempt to answer this question of the specific hierarchical nature of labour division by gender, some anthropologists stepped out of the functionalist paradigm. In this regard the work of Margaret Mead, Joan Bamberger, Bridget O'Laughlin and Louise Lamphere (among others) is important.

According to Mead an analysis of the specific gender division of labour in a society is secondary to an analysis of the status of the labourer performing the task. In other words, the status of the person performing the task is more important than the task itself. The value of the task is dependent on the status of the person that performed it and not vice versa. "Men may cook or weave or dress

dolls or hunt humming birds, but if such activities are appropriate occupations of men, then the whole society, men and women alike, votes them as important. When the same activities are performed by women, they are regarded as less important" (Mead, quoted by Spender, 1981 : v).

The specific gender division of labour does not precede the creation of gender status, but vice versa. Within my research tradition I shall label "status" (as used by Mead) "authority" (see 3.4 above). It is thus the unequal gender authority (in favour of men) that leads to the hierarchical gender division of labour (which is dominated by men).

5.4 Labour power: exchange value; use value and surplus value - a clarification

The human capacity to perform labour is labelled by Marx "labour power". "By labour power or capacity for labour is to be understood the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use value of any description" (Marx, quoted by Vogel, 1983 : 138). Workers do not sell their labour to the capitalist but their labour power, in other words, their capacity to work. Under capitalism, labour power becomes a commodity, and whereas Marx (above) referred to labour power as having use value, under capitalism it has a specific value, namely exchange value. (3)

In precapitalist modes of production goods were primarily produced for use, and were thus valued for their utility. Where exchange did occur, it centred around the use value of the product and not its exchange/re-exchange value. Under capitalism this changed: "The aim is no longer to sell in order to buy, but to buy in order to sell, or rather, re-sell. Economic life is directed: not toward the production of objects to be used by those who actually make them, nor toward

the fulfillment of some direct human need, but toward objects designed for sale in the market place for the sole purpose of generating profit. Goods which cannot be sold will tend not to be produced" (Gamble and Walton, 1976 : 115).

If use values are produced (because of their necessity) in a capitalist society, they will then have a lower value attached to them. This distinction between use and exchange value and the values intrinsically attached to them is important for our analysis of the position of women in the labour process, as they (in general) produce more use value and less exchange value than men. (4)

The exchange value of labour power (as a commodity) is usually seen as determined in the same way as the exchange value of all other commodities, thus by how much labour time went into the production of it. The worker producing this product (with exchange value) is seen as exploited, because there is a discrepancy between the wage the worker should receive and the wage she/he does receive; in other words, between value (real exchange value) of the product produced and the wage paid for its production. This "gap" is called surplus value, and it is possible for the bourgeoisie to extract surplus value from the proletariat because they own the means of production and, in the final instance, the labour power of the proletariat. (5) This surplus value extraction from the worker producing the product with exchange value constitutes the worker's exploitation. I disagree with the above marxist logic.

The basic problem with the orthodox marxist use of exploitation is that it is used only to describe the situation of workers earning a wage (and thus producing surplus value). This conceptual meaning can thus not account for the exploitation of slaves, prisoners in labour camps, women doing housework or the unwaged in general.

Exploitation in orthodox marxism can be summarized diagrammatically as follows:

(i) waged worker:

worker A's labour is worth X (exchange value),

but worker A's actual wage = $X - Y$;

therefore,

Y = surplus value appropriated by the employer and thus constitutes the worker's exploitation.

(ii) unwaged worker:

worker B's labour is worth "nothing" (no exchange value),

and worker B earns "nothing";

therefore,

because worker B produces no exchange value, no surplus value can be appropriated, and the worker can thus not be exploited.

Poulantzas, however, argued that "while every worker is a wage earner, not every wage earner is a worker, since not every wage earner is necessarily a productive earner" (Poulantzas, 1973 : 30). For this reason, wage earners in commerce, banks, service industries and so on are not (for Poulantzas) productive workers in marxist terms. Poulantzas thus relegates the production of use value to unproductive labour, and within an orthodox marxist framework he is correct.

While I agree with Poulantzas that the worker he is referring to is producing use value (and not exchange value), I disagree that his worker can thus not be exploited, as some of the worker's labour power has to be appropriated by the worker's capitalist employer to enable the latter to make a profit. In other words, the mere fact that some people only produce use value does not of itself indem-

nify them from exploitation. I thus agree with Cock that "whether service workers are productive or unproductive is a question that affects only the form of their exploitation, not the issue of whether they are exploited or not" (Cock, 1980 : 12).

While Marx would use exchange value to determine whether labour has social value or not, I argue that by using exchange value as the criterion for ascertaining the social or non social value of labour, one is in fact isolating all labour as an individual act (with more individual than social meaning), since only the specific labour act producing the final product (with exchange value) is taken into account. Whether socially necessary labour has exchange or use value does not change the fundamental importance of that specific labour. The only fundamental difference between women producing use value in the domestic mode of reproduction and production and men producing exchange value in the industrial mode of production and reproduction, is the fact that the former are maintained while the latter are paid.

This is the same difference as is present between a prisoner doing forced labour, such as cultivating crops (thus producing a product with exchange value), and a wage labourer doing the same. Another example would be the difference between a prisoner forced to wash the floors (producing only use value) and a wage labourer doing the same. The production of exchange or use value, as waged or unwaged labourer, establishes neither the criteria for exploitation nor the social value of labour.

In reformulating the interrelationship between exchange, use and surplus value and labour power, I argue that the value of labour power is determined by what is needed to reproduce the worker who produced the product that can be exchanged. This reproduction refers to the value of the means of subsistence of

both the worker and his/her successors (future generations). The value of labour power is thus the total of what is necessary to keep the labourer producing, and the reproduction of him/herself through children as his/her successors. I thus do not see surplus value as the difference between real exchange value and wage paid for the product.

My argument is that surplus value is the difference between the real exchange value of the product and the use values needed to produce the product with exchange value. It is thus not through wages that people are exploited but through the appropriation of the use values that they produce and which reproduced them. This in turn makes it possible for them to produce products with exchange value.

In our society the most fundamental exploitation (use value appropriation) is obscured by the reality that use values are produced by women, but men then appropriate them in order to make it possible for them to produce products with exchange value.

Because labour power is seen (by marxists and non-marxists) only in direct relation to exchange ("the capacity for labour is nothing unless sold" - Sismondi, quoted with approval by Marx, 1976 : 227), wage became the central, most important phenomenon in explaining exploitation. This patriarchal way of interpreting exploitation severely limits our understanding of exploitation.

In seeing surplus value as the difference between real exchange value and the use value needed for the production of the product with exchange value, we are able to directly link (within one framework) the exploitation of the male worker - producing a product with "exchange value" in the industrial mode of production and reproduction - and the female worker (wife) - in the domestic mode of

reproduction and production, producing the use values needed by the male to enable him to produce in the industrial mode of production. I thus argue that domestic labour is value-producing labour, not because domestic labour enters directly into exchange but because its direct product - the commodity labour power - does.

5.5 Gender division of labour

Within the marxist tradition, there are several different views as to what the relationship between capitalism and the gender division of labour is. Marx, for one, saw the "sexual" [gender] division of labour as precapitalistic and as withering away with the development of capitalism (see 3.3 above). Most contemporary marxist feminists, however, analyse capitalism and the sexual division of labour in relation to each other, interconnected in a social system that can be labelled "capitalist patriarchy" (see Eisenstein, 1979 : 6).

For contemporary marxist feminists, "sexual [gender] subordination flows from the sexual division of labour, which, under capitalism, takes the extreme form of separation of the general economic process into a domestic and an industrial unit" (Coulson, Magas and Wainwright, 1975 : 60).

Hunt used the same inherent logic, but specifies more precisely the "position" of socially created gender identity within a contemporary marxist paradigm. "In capitalist society the division between industrial production and domestic production is the foundation of the gender division between men, primarily seen as breadwinners, and women, primarily seen and acting as home-makers" (Hunt, 1980 : 6). The inherent logic of this argument is problematic to me for two reasons.

First, instead of seeing the gender division of labour and capitalism as only influencing and moulding the particular form each takes on within a particular society, I argue that without a gender division of labour capitalism would never have developed. It was (and is) the gender division of labour that made the creation of an industrial mode of production and reproduction, and then the separation between the domestic and industrial modes, possible, because women produced the use values needed by men (and which they appropriated) in order to make it possible for them to produce primarily goods with exchange value. As men's appropriation of women's use values grew, their opportunity and ability to produce goods with exchange value increased as well.

Instead of seeing the general division of labour as moulding capitalism (and vice versa), I thus argue that it was the gender division of labour that made the development of capitalism possible in the first place. In other words, à la marxism I see the gender division of labour as being the materialistic base of capitalism. Consequently, the survival of capitalism is also primarily dependent on the gender division of labour. An important consequence of the logic of my hypothesis is that a truly socialist revolution should, in the first place, be a revolution abolishing the gender division of labour.

Second, I have a problem with the idea that (within a marxist paradigm) the gender division of labour "created" gender, or, in other words, formed the material base for gender identity creation. Within marxism, an important distinction is made between productive and unproductive labour and the former (because it produces exchange value, etc.) is seen as the single, most important dynamic in society. Because unproductive labour only produces use value and thus (for Marx) no surplus value, it is not a fundamental dynamic in the social organization of society. Marxists are thus referring to the gender division of a productive (and not unproductive) labourer's role in gender creation. It is precise-

ly this assumption that is problematic to me (even if productive and unproductive labour together were seen as the dynamic force in gender creation, I would still find it problematic).

My argument is linked to my first hypothesis, that the creation of an industrial mode of production and reproduction, and then the separation between the industrial and domestic modes of reproduction and production were (and are) in the first place made possible by the gender division of labour. By these means women produced the use values (thus performing "unproductive" labour) needed by men to produce exchange values (thus performing "productive" labour). Instead of seeing gender creation as a result of the gender division of "productive" labour, I see it as resulting from the gender identity creation within the domestic mode of production. This gender identity creation is brought about through the gender division of unproductive labour, which (as a system) develops into what I labelled the "mother-monopolized mode of childrearing".

In using orthodox marxist terminology, we can thus not say that the gender division of labour is the origin of gender identity and a gender hierarchy in itself. Instead, the gender division of "productive" labour is the result of the gender identity created by the gender division of "unproductive" labour, which in itself makes it possible for men to appropriate women's labour. In the process of this appropriation, gender identity is created. This appropriation is then perpetuated by the hierarchical ordering of labour by gender categories.

5.6 Notes and references

1. In working with the importance of labour and labour relations in society (in order to understand the gender division of labour), we cannot ignore the contribution of anthropology to our understanding of the gender division of labour and exchange- relations. Anthropology has also taught us (as social scientists) that all social hypotheses are always comparative statements. According to Mead, "'These people cook their food in pots' implies a comparison with other peoples who cook in bamboo, in earth ovens, or with food wrapped in leaves, on skewers, or in wooden boxes. 'The baby is weaned at a year' compares this people to others who wean at six months, nine months, two years, at walking, when the mother is pregnant again, or who attempt never to wean the youngest child at all" (Mead in Hoyles, 1979 : 112-113). Anthropology has also made an important contribution to our understanding of power in society (see 3.4 above).

2. For Aaby asymmetrical power relations between genders arise in agricultural societies where the reproduction of labourers is very important. Men gain control over the reproductive potential of women through rules of marriage exchange (Aaby, 1977 : 38). This method of establishing control is problematic to me since it works with the assumption (as Lévi-Strauss did) that it is men who by definition exchange women (see 5.3 above). I argue that the increasing need for the reproduction of labour power (in the societies mentioned) is defined as the "responsibility" of women. The "responsibility" of women thus centres around reproduction and that of men on production. Men are thus able to accumulate surpluses over immediate subsistence needs.

3. According to Wilson, "When he enters the employment of the capitalist, the worker sells his labour-power , his capacity to work. Like any other commodity, labour-power has both use-value and exchange-value. The exchange-

value of labour-power is determined in the same fashion as the exchange-value of any other commodity, by how much labour time went into producing it. In this case, the labour time necessary to produce it is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the 'reproduction' of the worker. 'The value of labour power is a sum of the labour of others required to keep the labourer continuously appearing in the market and of the labour required to train and maintain his children, who are his future substitutes' (Smelser and Warner, 1976 : 215)". (Wilson, 1983 : 179).

4. According to Mandel, "Every commodity must have both a use-value and an exchange-value...On the other hand, every product which has use-value does not necessarily have exchange-value...Two classes of products still remain simple use-value...The first group consists of all things produced by the peasantry for its own consumption, everything directly consumed on the farms where it is produced... The second group of products in capitalist society which are not commodities but remain simple use-value consists of all things produced in the home" (Mandel, quoted by Benston, 1978 : 177).

For Nicolson the distinctions Marx made in *Capital* "such as that between use-value and exchange-value, are distinctions applicable only for certain societies" (Nicolson, 1986 : 191). Although I in general agree with Nicolson, I argue that all "distinctions" must also be studied within the particular social structures of the specific society.

5. "The wage-worker sells his labour-power to the owner of land, factories and instruments of labour. The worker spends one part of the day covering the cost of maintaining himself and his family (wages), while the other part of the day he works without remuneration, creating for the capitalist surplus-value, the source of profit, the source of the wealth of the capitalist class. The doctrine of

surplus-value is the corner-stone of Marx's economic theory" (Lenin, in Marx and Engels, 1968 : 25).

CHAPTER 6

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK ⁽¹⁾

"Who cleans the john, who picks the ball hairs out of the sink ?" (Mina, quoted by Janssen-Jurreit, 1982 : 171).

"The material basis for the inferior status of women is to be found in just this definition of women. In a society in which money determines value, women are a group who work outside the money economy. Their work is not worth money, is therefore valueless, is therefore not even real work. And women themselves who do this valueless work can hardly expect to be worth as much as men, who work for money" (Benston, 1978 : 178).

"The role of housewife, behind whose isolation is hidden social labour, must be destroyed" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 49).

6.1 Problem synopsis

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse critically both the historical debate on "wages for housework" and the contribution of the debate to a materialist social theory of the gender division of labour in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society.

6.2 Some prominent phenomena

In this section I propose to discuss some social phenomena that directly influence the social and theoretical milieu within which the "wages for housework" debate takes place.

6.2.1 The family wage

"Men earn a family wage and women earn 'pin money'" (Land, 1982 : 289).

Women's wages are in general lower than the cost of the reproduction of their own labour power. According to Veronica Beechey the inherent logic of the general trend to justify this discrepancy is related to the "assumption that women are subsidiary workers and their husbands' wages are responsible for the costs of reproduction" (Beechey, 1978 : 185). This social reality (of lower wages) severely restricts women's choices as far as a career is concerned. Women's choices are dominated by their dependence on men (as husbands) and consequently their careers are structured around the reality of their primary involvement in the domestic mode.

"However, if we can compare the standard of living to which a woman can aspire if she remains single and the standard which she can expect from being married, it seems certain that relative economic deprivation will be experienced by single women as time goes on. We are confronted with a paradox: on the one hand marriage is the (institutional) situation where women are exploited; on the other hand, precisely because of this, the potential market situation for women's labour (which is that of all women, not just those who are actually married (see Barron and Norris, 1976) is such that marriage still offers them the best career, economically speaking" (Delphy, 1984 : 97).

The main problems with the family-wage-social-reality argument ("men's wages ought to be enough to support the entire family" - Oren, quoted by Hunt, 1980 : 1) and its implications are the following.

First, it increases women's dependence both on men (and their wages) and on the socially de-valued domestic mode of production for the creation of self-es-

teem. Women are caught up in the "second division" running in a "race" that does not really count.

Second, women are neither viewed as wage workers nor paid enough (as wage workers) to become wage workers earning enough to reproduce their own labour power.

Third, the inherent assumption is that men have dependents and that men's wages should thus be high enough to meet the needs of their dependents. In the case of women's wages this is not a consideration. This assumption is problematic since not all men have dependents and many women do.

Fourth, under apartheid the combination of the gender division of labour and migrant labour has the following important consequences for the family-wage-social-reality:

- (i) It forced the family wage even lower since the family of the migrant labourer remains in the homeland where the cost of their production and reproduction is met through the subsistence economy. The family wage is consequently even lower than the direct cost of the production and reproduction of the family and its labour power.
- (ii) This system ensures that the migrant labourer becomes and stays part of a permanent industrial reserve army as (in relation to my first argument) his day-to-day reproduction can be met in the subsistence economy (run by his wife) in times of unemployment. This "prevents" unemployment from becoming the responsibility of the state and its capitalist "fellow-travellers".

- (iii) The system prevents women from entering the labour market as permanent workers, and they thus also form part of the industrial reserve army.
There is, however, (because of the gender division of labour) a difference between the "kinds" of industrial reserve army into which these women and men can be classified.
- (iv) Because of the underdevelopment of the homelands and the oversupply of especially "women's" labour, wages (or potential wages) of women are extremely low.
- (v) The influence and consequences of mother-monopolized childrearing in these totally fatherless communities are even more severe (see 4.7 above) and thus enforce an even stronger patriarchal social structure.

Despite the extreme exploitation resulting from migrant labour and despite the above consequences of its combination with the gender division of labour, any analysis of migrant labour should start with the basic assumption that the gender division of labour is a prerequisite for a system of migrant labour to function at all. This reality is ignored by many marxists. Deere in *Rural Women's Subsistence Production in the Capitalist Periphery* (1976) argues that it is women's contribution towards the maintenance and reproduction of labour within the rural labour reserve which permits the domestic mode of production to absorb the costs of production and reproduction of labour power. For Deere it is "the division of labour by sex [gender], based on the articulation between modes of production [which] serves to lower the value of labour power for capital, enhancing the relative rate of surplus value for peripheral capital accumulation" (Deere, 1976 : 9).

6.2.2 Industrial reserve army

For Marx an industrial reserve army is both a necessary product and a lever of capital accumulation. "But if a surplus population of workers is a necessary product of accumulation or of the development of wealth on a capitalist basis, this surplus population also becomes, conversely, the lever of capitalist accumulation, indeed it becomes a condition for the existence of the capitalist mode of production. It forms a disposable industrial reserve army, which belongs to capital just as absolutely as if the latter had bred it at its own cost. Independently of the limits of the actual increase of population, it creates a mass of human material always ready for exploitation by capital in the interest of capital's own changing valorization requirements" (Marx, 1976 : 784).

The development of capitalism and the labour power required by this development is directly linked by the same causes (Marx, 1976 : 798). An increase in centralized social wealth under capitalism thus also leads to an increase in the industrial reserve army. "The relative mass of the industrial reserve army thus increases with the potential energy of wealth. But the greater this reserve army is in proportion to the active labour army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus population, whose misery is in inverse ratio to the amount of torture it has to undergo in the form of labour. The more extensive, finally, the pauperized sections of the working class and the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation" (Marx, 1976 : 798).

Marx distinguished between three main forms of the relative surplus population: the floating, the latent and the stagnant (Marx, 1976 : 794-797). Although women can be classified under each of the categories (according to the criteria

set out by Marx), the reality of gender division of labour does give women a specific position as far as the industrial reserve army is concerned.

In a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society women are part of the unskilled section of the industrial reserve army and thus especially part of the floating industrial reserve army. Two important phenomena are present here.

First, for Philips and Taylor skill definitions are saturated with a gender bias.

"The work of women is often deemed inferior simply because it is women who do it. Women workers carry into the workplace their status as subordinate individuals, and this status comes to define the value of the work they do. Far from being an objective economic fact, skill is often an ideological category imposed on certain types of workers who perform it" (Philips and Taylor, 1980 : 79) (see 3.4 above).

Second, Marx argues that the general tendency of wages is that these are regulated by the expansion and contraction of the industrial reserve army. In applying this analysis to a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society, we can argue that women's employment (and unemployment) exerts pressure on wages (since their wages are lower than men's). However, this pressure can be sustained only if the female industrial reserve army stays large enough both to keep women's wages low and to keep women's labour secondary to men's.

Women's structural unemployment is thus an important lever not only for keeping women's wages low, but wages in general, and for keeping women primarily involved in the domestic mode of production. Consequently, their entrance into the industrial mode of production is moulded by their role as domestic workers, in other words, as housewives.

6.2.3 The housewife-role

In orthodox marxism the inner logic of capitalism is seen to be anti-patriarchal (see 3.3 above). For Marx and Engels: "the less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 42). For this reason Al Szymanski (1976), using an orthodox marxist paradigm, comes to the conclusion that "housework plays less and less of a role as a cause of sexism, as more and more women leave their home and sell their labour power directly to the capitalists" (Szymanski, 1976 : 39).

The above approach is problematic on three counts. First, it does not confront the issue of a gender division of labour (which is hierarchical and male dominated - see 5.5 above). Second, today we know that the development of capitalism (or socialism) does not of itself destroy patriarchy and thus the male-dominated gender division of labour. Third, it cannot explain why women, when they enter the industrial mode of production and reproduction, always enter as women. Braverman in *Labour and Monopoly Capital* (1974) points out how women were drawn into employment in textiles, clothing, food processing and so on as these activities became appropriated from the family by capitalist commodity production. There appears to be a parallel between women's wage work and their domestic labour as far as the kind of task performed by them is concerned. In other words, women tend to perform similar tasks in the domestic mode of production. The kind of labour they perform thus seems to be a continuation of their role as housewife.

The influence of gender creation (see 4.7 above) is of continuous importance and the "web" is not "broken" by entrance into the industrial mode of production. On the contrary, entrance into the industrial mode of production re-inforces the gender identity of the participant. In the case of women the consequence of this phenomenon is that all forms of women's work are really "housework" (Power of Women Collective in *All Work and no Pay* - 1975). This results from the reality that the industrial mode of production does not do away with gender identity, but enforces the gender identity of its participants; "...even those [women] who work outside the home continue to be housewives" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 21). We can, however, rephrase Dalla Costa and James to read that even women who are not housewives in the domestic mode of reproduction and production nevertheless work as "housewives" (in other words, according to the housewife role) in the industrial mode of production and reproduction.

6.3 The historical debate

Within the marxist tradition the most important dispute concerning domestic labour is whether or not housework is productive or unproductive labour. This question is answered by establishing whether domestic labour produces surplus value or not. Although Inman published *In Women's Defence* (defining housework in such a way as to establish women as an exploited class - "housewives") in 1940, it is only since the early 1970s that the debate within marxism really started.

One of the first important articles published in this regard is Benston's *The Political Economy of Women's Liberation* (1969). According to Benston, domestic labour is essentially precapitalist in character. It is a historical "hangover" from the feudal mode of production which has survived into capitalism and has not yet been socialized into public production. This leads to women becoming

secondary in capitalist society because their domestic labour is unpaid. This labour, producing only use values (for Benston), constitutes the material base for women's exploitation.

The main problem marxists have with Benston's analysis is that within the orthodox marxist paradigm (used by Benston) only workers producing surplus value can be exploited. As surplus value can only be appropriated from wage workers producing both use and exchange values women are thus not exploited and domestic labour does not form the material base for this "exploitation".

In 1970 Peggy Morton published *A Women's Work*. Morton extends Benston's argument by analysing domestic labour within the structural framework of a contemporary capitalist industrial society. According to Morton there is a direct link between the social institution of the family and the interaction of the domestic and industrial modes of production. It is within the structure of the family that the maintenance and reproduction of labour power takes place. For this reason the task of the family is to "maintain the present work force and provide the next generation of workers, fitted with the skills and values necessary for them to be productive members of the work force" (Morton, 1970 : 215-216). In this analysis women are not only central within the domestic mode, but also in the industrial mode since they do not only maintain and reproduce this mode but also serve as a reserve army of labour for it.

In reaction to Benston, Morton, Dalla Costa and James (see below) Secombe wrote *The Housewife and her Labour under Capitalism*. Secombe argues that domestic labour achieves value in the selling of labour power. It nevertheless remains a "privatized" labour outside the law of value. It thus contributes directly to the creation of the commodity "labour power", without having a direct rela-

tion to capital itself. For Secombe it is this special duality that defines the character of domestic labour under capitalism.

In Secombe's hypothesis the labour that produces labour power and the labour that produces wage are two distinct "forms" of labour. Domestic labour forms part only of the former (Secombe, 1973 : 10). Within this framework he defines productive labour as having two characteristics: that it is conducted in direct relation to capital and that it produces surplus value. Since domestic labour meets neither criterion (for Secombe), he comes to the conclusion that domestic labour is unproductive and "conforms with Marx's description of unproductive labour 'exchanged not with capital but with revenue, that is wages or profits' (Marx)" (Secombe, 1973 : 11). The housewife is thus (in marxist terms) unexploited because no surplus value is extracted from her labour. "To say this is not, as James and Dalla Costa imply, to be soft on women's oppression. The housewife is intensely oppressed within the nuclear family under capitalism, but she is not exploited" (Secombe, 1973 : 11).

In 1972 Maria Dalla Costa and Selma James published *Women and the Subversion of the Community*. For Dalla Costa and James housework is productive labour because it is through domestic labour that labour power is maintained and reproduced. In their analysis labour power is a very special commodity. Women are not only producing use values but their labour is essential for the production of surplus value; "...domestic work produces not merely use-values, but it is essential to the production of surplus-values" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 33). It is for Dalla Costa and James thus only the "position" of women in relation to the production of surplus value, and not the relation in itself, that differs from the relation that men have to the production of surplus value. Housewives are thus productive workers who are consequently exploited. (2)

The exploitation of housewives (in other words, the appropriation of their labour-producing surplus value) is accomplished by the payment of a wage only for the work done by the husband. In this process the husband then becomes the instrument through which women are exploited. "Capital established the family as the nuclear family and subordinated within it the woman to the man, as the person who, not directly participating in social production, does not present herself independently on the labour market" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 30). For this reason the private character of household services is an illusion. The housework done for her husband and children is not a private service. On the contrary, it is a service of which her husband's employer (and the future employers of her children) are the primary beneficiaries.

The demand that housewives be paid a wage is based on the assumption that they produce a commodity (labour power) that is essential, and as such as valuable as the commodities their husbands produce. Defined in this way housewives do, for Dalla Costa and James, directly participate in the production of surplus value. Consequently women are not oppressed, but are exploited.

6.4 Conclusion

"The 'discovery' of housework cannot be dissociated from the denunciation of its being unpaid. It could not be discovered first as work and then as unpaid work. It had to be seen simultaneously as work and unpaid work, that is, as exploitation" (Delphy, 1984 : 174).

The most argued logic against wages paid for housework is that housework is unpaid because it is not productive, and that it is not productive because it produces no exchange value. Not only have I established that many wage workers would (according to this definition) then produce no surplus value and would thus not be exploited (for example, teachers, soldiers and so on as one category and those

wage workers whose products are directly consumed without entering the market as the other - see 5.4 above), but also that women as domestic labourers do produce surplus value (despite the fact that their labour is unpaid - in other words, that wage per se is no criterion for establishing whether surplus value is produced or not - see 5.4 above).

Nevertheless, for a materialist feminism to establish a theoretical basis and a social right to a wage does not in itself mean that the struggle for wages (for housework) should be a fundamental feminist struggle against patriarchy (or be included in the struggle at all). In other words, to have a theoretical and social right (to a wage) does not necessarily mean that a struggle for this right is essential or even necessary at all in order to achieve the ultimate goal (in other words, to eliminate a hierarchical gender division of labour in favour of men). This theoretical and social legitimate struggle may even be counterproductive.

For Sweeney (1977) women, as housewives, work primarily for capital (for James, 1973, primarily for the state). "It appears that we freely donate all this work to our husbands and children out of love for them. In reality we are working for the same bosses, who are getting two workers for the price of one. Our lives are governed by those we serve. When we cook dinner or when we 'make love' is determined by the factory time-clock" (Sweeney, 1977 : 104).

For Sweeney, Dalla Costa, James and others wages for housework are not only a method of redistribution (a just redistribution) of wealth - "the state has a lot of money and all of it is ours. We want it back" (James, 1973 : 6; also see Benston, 1978 :183) - but it is also a fundamental method of changing the social conditions in which housework is performed. This would enable women to choose whether she prefers to work inside or outside the home; "...a housewife, if she wishes to destroy housework, must first gain that minimum leverage that a wage

provides" (Allen, quoted by Eichler, 1980 : 134). Wages for housework are thus seen as the central issue in the process of totally restructuring the current social structure.

While the above "school of thought" basically (to put it in very simple terms) analyses the unpaid domestic labour of women as structuring gender roles in society, other feminists (this is again formulated in very simple terms) see the marriage contract (which for them is a labour contract) as the phenomenon making unpaid domestic labour possible in the first place. Instead of seeing unpaid domestic labour as the cause of women's exploitation, it is rather seen as the symptom of the cause, namely, the marriage contract which makes the appropriation of women's labour (by men) possible. "The fact that domestic work is unpaid is not inherent to the particular type of work done, since when the same tasks are done outside the family they are paid for. The work acquires value - is remunerated - as long as the woman furnishes it to people to whom she is not related or married. The valuelessness of domestic work performed by married women derives institutionally from the marriage contract, which is in fact a work contract" (Delphy, 1984 : 95).

The labour that the marriage contract provides - namely free domestic labour - is "at the heart of both class and sex [gender] oppression. It is the role to which all other roles within a capitalist mode of production will refer" (C.C.C.S. Women's Studies Group in Kuhn, 1978 : 57). For Delphy the appropriation of the labour within marriage constitutes the oppression common to all women (see 4.10 above).

Both of the above "schools of thought" analyse unpaid domestic labour as being the root of the patriarchal problem. But while the former sees wages for housework as the "way out", the latter argues for the destruction of the marriage

contract itself since it is a labour contract providing free domestic labour in marriage.

In summary I conclude that the wages-for-housework-theorists (especially Dalla Costa) have made an extremely important contribution in putting the gender division of labour into a materialist context. In pointing out that childcare and housework are material activities resulting in products, they make a fundamental contribution to social theory. Their analysis also serves as a starting point from which we can re-examine orthodox marxist concepts (such as surplus value, exploitation and so on).

Their main shortcoming is, however, that their analysis in itself does not essentially question the basic division of labour. If women were only domestic workers, wages for housework might indeed (as Allen suggested) increase women's choices as far as selling their power is concerned. But women are both domestic and wage workers. This dual and contradictory role imparts a specific dynamic to their situation (Coulson, Magas and Wainwright, 1975 : 60). To be paid a wage for domestic work will not fundamentally change women's gender situation, as the appropriation of their labour is itself not changed by the payment of a wage. (3)

I thus see wages for housework in reality as changing only the form of women's exploitation, as women's labour will still be appropriated by their bosses (whether these be their husbands or the state). Nevertheless, a theoretical analysis of domestic work as both work and unpaid work is an important analytical tool in analysing a hierarchical gender division of labour in its totality.

6.5 Notes and references

1. "The demand for wage has in itself an ideological impact. We are looking at our work in a new way. We have been taught to see that work is an expression of our femininity, in which, we are told, our finest quality - generosity - is fully expressed in giving others security and serenity. The fact that we now see that work as a social necessary activity, which must be paid for just like the work our fathers, husbands, and sons do outside the home, is already a big step towards achieving an attitude of detachment, towards destroying the natural fixed role which society assigns us" (Pompei, in Jagger and Struhl, 1978 : 199).
2. "Woman...has been isolated in the home, forced to carry out work that is considered unskilled, the work of giving birth to, raising, disciplining, and servicing the worker for production. Her role in the cycle of social production remained invisible because only the product of her labour, the labourer, was visible there. She herself was thereby trapped within pre-capitalist working conditions and never paid a wage" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 28).
3. For detailed criticism of the "wages-for-housework-strategy" see Malos, 1978 and Lopate, 1974.

According to Eichler the main criticisms of the strategy are:

- (i) Wages-for-housework does not question the basic division of labour by sex [gender]; it will thus keep women in the house rather than integrate them into the larger society.
- (ii) The cost of such a programme is such that one of two things would happen: either the full amount would be paid, in which case the state would go broke, or only a fraction of it would be paid, which would not greatly help women since it would leave them dependent on men.

- (iii) The conditions of housework (that is, social isolation, monotony, overwork) would not be changed by a wage.
- (iv) There is no concrete plan for action; it is an unrealistic demand.
- (v) Wages are paid out only under conditions of supervision. Therefore, wages for housework would create a condition of complete state supervision and licensing of private households, a nightmare of big brother's control that would thereby invade the last place where autonomy and self reliance can be practised (Eichler, 1980 : 134).

CHAPTER 7

WOMEN AND CLASS

7.1 Problem synopsis

The purpose of this chapter is first, to define the marxist criteria for a class; second, to assess the possibility of whether women as women constitute a class within a materialist research tradition; third, to analyse the influence of my above conclusion on social theory itself; and fourth, to analyse the interaction of gender, class and race in South Africa.

7.2 Marxism and class (1)

For marxists the concept "class" has a very precise meaning, namely people sharing common positions in relation to the means of production of a society. The development of the class struggle is thus integrated into an analysis of the interaction of capital and labour in the process of production, and more specifically, the production of surplus value within the process of production.

A marxist class can be defined in two interrelated ways: by the role it plays in the process of production (accumulation of surplus value) and by the stake it has in the ownership of the means of production (private property). Ownership or non-ownership is the objective criterion of class membership; in Marx's terms "a class in itself". The subjective criterion for class membership - a class becoming "a class for itself" - refers to class consciousness. This is achieved through political struggle.

"Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against

capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have pointed out only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle" (Marx, quoted by Larrian, 1983 : 165).

The basis of class division is thus found in the struggle for the appropriation of surplus value, and classes (for Marx) emerge where the relations of production involve a differentiated division of labour which in itself makes the accumulation of surplus possible. The struggle for the appropriation of surplus produced (for Marx) by labour is confined to the sphere of production. The consequence of this marxist analysis of class division is that it eliminates all labour performed in the domestic mode of reproduction. The labour of childbirth, childcare and the general production and reproduction of labour power is thus eliminated from a class analysis.

7.3 Women as a class

"Sex class is so deep as to be invisible" (Firestone, 1978 : 118).

"It is the law of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes" (Engels, 1978 : 122).

"Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 42).

The gender division of labour predates capitalism (see 3.3 and 5.5 above). Nonetheless the form and the consequences of the gender division of labour changed with the development of capitalist class society. Women were more and more removed from social production to become "farm-family" producers, working for their families. With industrialization the productive farm-family was

replaced by the nuclear family, which furthermore isolated women from social production, since their labour was now appropriated within a small, single, isolated, nuclear family.

This meant that women became more and more socially invisible behind their husbands who embodied the nuclear family unit vis-à-vis other similar units as the norm in society. Consequently women's position in the stratification system was increasingly mediated and conditioned by a personal relationship (to a husband), while men's position in the stratification system was more and more mediated and conditioned by their relationship to the social structure - in other words, within a materialist analysis, by their position within the mode of production and thus in universalistic occupational terms.

The fact that women as housewives have no occupation as such constitutes them (within orthodox theory) as members of a class whose class identity is established indirectly (and not directly as is the case with men). Furthermore, the housewife's role is, in our society, the prototype role from which women cannot escape (see 6.2 above). For this reason women's position in the stratification system is usually dealt with in terms of status rather than class (Oakley, 1974 : 9,13). Because classes are real social forces with political implications, the criteria used to define a class are of more than merely academic interest.

The basis of the argument against the possible defining of women as a class in itself is that classes are defined by their relation to the means of production.

Women are not seen as having a direct relation to the means of production and are thus socially not important enough to be included in an autonomous social class analysis. The specific relation of women to production is thus ignored, since the conceptual framework used for class analysis does not include (with

mode of production) a mode of reproduction and the interaction of the two modes in the process of constructing the social structure of a specific society.

My analysis of class takes as its basic assumption the idea that classes are not *sui generis* and thus not constituted before social interaction has taken place. If this interaction is so structured that specific structures can be identified (if one may so generalize), then the possibility of class analysis does exist, if these structures enable one group to appropriate some of the labour of the other. My argument will thus be conducted within this framework.

Within the domestic mode of production the institution of marriage (whatever form it may take in a particular society) is the social institution with the most profound influence on the social structure (see 4.10 above). Within the institution of marriage the division of labour is the social act with the most profound influence on the institution itself and upon its structure (see 4.10 above). In our industrialized society the division of labour within the nuclear family is characterized by the appropriation of women's (as wives) labour by men (as husbands). Within this structure generalizations can be made about the position of men vis-à-vis women in regard to the appropriation of women's labour by men.

The social practice of appropriation of women's labour by men and the resulting social relations, constitute men and women as opposing groups (as general trends in this interaction can be identified) with regard to the social organization of labour (see 5.5 above). This implies that men and women cannot be considered separately but that they are bound together (like the proletariat and the bourgeoisie) in a relationship characterized by unequal labour appropriation and thus relations of exploitation. As a class is a social construction and a social reality, it is the labour process itself (and not, for example, social theory) that defines class boundaries.

For Marx "The communal interest...(of a class)...does not exist merely in the imagination, as the general interest, but first of all in the reality as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom the labour is divided" (Marx, quoted by Poulantzas, 1986 : 151). Thus, given the importance of labour and its determining influence on the social structure of a society (see 5.2 above), the implication of the above formulation of the relationship between men and women within the labour process is that men and women are two distinct classes.

If one considers the social importance of the domestic mode of production for structuring the relations of production and reproduction (see 8.3 below), then this patriarchal class division is socially more influential (than the class divisions within, for example, the industrial mode) in the process of determining the social relations in a society. The class structure of the domestic mode is thus dominant over the class structure of the industrial mode. Consequently the material base of the patriarchal class "women" is constituted by patriarchal relations of reproduction and production, and not by the capitalist relations of reproduction and production. However, this analysis does not exclude capitalism as a material base of women's exploitation. Instead, I argue that under capitalism women's exploitation (and relation to the class structure) are characterized by a mutually invigorative duality.

Despite similarities, there are fundamental differences between the dependency of women (as a class) on men (as a class) and the dependency of the proletariat on the bourgeoisie. First, the dependency of women on men is characterized by a direct, personal material dependency and an emotional interdependency ("love").

Second, women are a dependency class who, in stark contrast to the proletariat, live directly on the surplus mediated to them by their superordinate class, men. If we incorporate the composition of, and the direct contribution of women to,

"surplus" (see 5.4 above) into the above phenomenon, it becomes clear how complex and unique patriarchal class relations are in the form and method of exploitation. Within my research tradition I will constitute this as follows:

- within the domestic mode women produce products and things (goods and services with either use or exchange value, or both),
- these products and things are then appropriated by men,
- the appropriated values are then carried over (by men) into the industrial mode of production and reproduction, where they are fundamental to the process of exchange relations,
- exchange relations in the industrial mode are mediated by the payment of a wage,
- this wage is then brought into the domestic sphere by men as the product of their labour and consequently controlled by them.

This represents the housewife's *cul du sac*. Together with the material, social and emotional forces, it leads to the social reality that for most women the best career choice is marriage to a wealthy man.

Third, even if a woman is not materially dependent on a man, or even if a man is materially dependent on a woman, this lack of dependency or "dependency in reverse" does not change their class positions. Women cannot, as the proletariat can, change their subordinate patriarchal class position. A patriarchal class position is thus a static and assigned class position. A patriarchal class is thus more than just a social class; it is a social caste.

Fourth, some women may, under capitalism, be beneficiaries of the appropriation of the labour power of some men, but this does not in itself mean that the same women will not be exploited by other men. Women married to bourgeois

men may acquire "actual" power, but never "real" power/authority. Neither will they escape "objectification" (see 4.7 above). On the contrary, it may well be that the objectification of women increases in the higher escelons.

Fifth, women, although a class "in itself", are not a class "for itself". A class "for itself" is not a theoretical label that social scientists can give to a group of individuals just because it is an effective theoretical tool. A class "for itself" is a class "in itself" which has a collective self-consciousness of themselves as members of a group that share a common identity, common interests and unite in a struggle to achieve these interests. As to why a class "in itself" does not necessarily become a class "for itself", Marx (in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*) argued as follows:

"The small-holding peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar conditions but without entering into manifold with one another. Their mode of production isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse. The isolation is increased by France's bad means of communication and by the poverty of the peasants...In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects them against the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small-holding peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself" (Marx, 1968 : 170-171).

In similar fashion women do not enter into manifold relations with each other. Their confinement to the social role of housewife and childminder and the general restriction of their social movement and mobility deny them the opportunity and experience of enforcing their class interests. Consequently they do not represent themselves, but are socially (and in many cases within legal, religious, political, etc. structures) represented by men. The social influence of women, therefore, finds its final expression in the "real" power of men subordinating society to itself.

"When women are deprived of wide experience of organizing and planning collectively industrial and other mass struggles, they are denied a basic source of education, the experience of social revolt. And this experience is primarily the experience of learning your own capacities, that is, your power, and the capacities, the power, of your class. Thus the isolation from which women have suffered has confirmed to society and to themselves the myth of female incapacity" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 30).

Sixth, with the development of capitalism, jobs, manipulative powers and knowledge become more and more fragmented and exploitation becomes more indirect and more impersonal, despite the reality that the manipulative process and powers become more visible. This in itself undermines the opportunities of a class "in itself" becoming a class "for itself". This leads to the phenomenon that with the development of capitalism the essence of social classes in society becomes less and less obvious. However, this does not mean that the existence of social classes becomes a less fundamental aspect of the process in which the structuring of the social structure of a particular society takes place. In other words: with the development of capitalism, gender would seem to vanish as being a determining social phenomenon.

This process is today articulated by, for example, the supposed "equal-opportunities logic", in terms of which the essence of patriarchal classes for the social structure would fade. But "equal" opportunities (in relations of production) in the industrial sphere of production are impossible if equality is to be reached within the social structure of a society which in turn is determined by the social structure of the domestic mode characterized by relations of exploitation. In other words, despite the reality that the essence of patriarchal classes becomes less obvious with the development of capitalism, the existence of patriarchal classes in itself remains fundamental to the social structure of a patriarchal society.

7.3.1 Conclusion

Firestone "rephrases" Engels to read that "the ultimate course and the great moving power of all historic events [are] ...the dialectic of sex: the division of society into two distinct biological classes for the procreative reproduction, and the struggles of these classes with one another; in the changes in the modes of marriage, reproduction and childcare; in the related development of other physically-differentiated classes (castes); and in the first division of labour based on sex which developed into the (economic) class system" (Firestone, 1970 : 13).

Within my research tradition I rephrase Firestone to read: The ultimate course and the great moving power of all historical events are the dialectic of gender: the division of society into two distinct sociological classes for sociological production and sociological reproduction, and the struggles of these classes with one another: in the changes in the modes of marriage, production, reproduction and childcare; in the related development of other social structures; and in the division of labour based on gender which developed into hierarchical ordering of society in classes.

Finally, I agree with Hartsock in suggesting that feminists should amend Marx to read: "Though [capitalist] class society appears to be the source, the cause of the oppression [exploitation] of women, it is rather its consequence" (Hartsock, 1983 : 305).

7.4 Gender, class and race

Within a materialist research tradition, an analysis of the interaction of gender, class and race in South Africa should start from the social reality of the unique inter-relationship of race and class in South Africa. (2)

Johnstone, in *Class, Race and Gold* (1976), argues that historically the white owners of the means of production acquired their class position of domination through the system of racial domination. For him this system is characterized by "class colour bars". These class colour bars are the result of restrictions on the property and political rights of blacks, "subjecting them to various forms of extra-economic compulsion and domination, [which] served specifically to perpetuate the economic dependence of the non-white [sic] population and to secure the extra-exploitability of their labour" (Johnstone, 1976 : 23), and the insecurity of the white working class.

The insecurity of the white working class is the result of their proletarianization, being without property and thus dependent on the owners of the means of production for jobs. On the other hand the extra cheapness of black labour constituted an incentive to capitalists to maximize profit by using as much cheap black labour as possible, and as little expensive white labour as possible. This unique form of "racial proletarianization" of the white working class led to a structural insecurity and this in turn generated the creation of legal colour bars. These colour bars were used by whites to improve their class position vis-à-vis

blacks. The colour bar in itself is a symptom of the structural insecurity of white workers, which in turn is the product of capitalism (Cock, 1980 : 234).

Today the industrial sector needs an increasingly higher percentage of skilled labour. This changes the form of capitalist exploitation, as colour bars now, in certain cases, become a handicap. This, together with international pressure (threats of disinvestment, boycotts and so on), has led to changes to the legal structure of labour relations. However, massive "black" unemployment and the mere existence of the homelands (which still serve as labour reservoirs) mean that the "black" reserve army is so large that changes in labour legislation do not affect the vast majority of blacks. The class colour bars are thus today as much a social reality as in the past.

It is within this labour process, constituting the exploitation of blacks in South Africa, that the interaction of class, race and gender takes place. Gender-class exploitation is consequently characterized by race differentiations.

7.4.1 White and black women

In this section I shall analyse the fundamental interaction of and differences between white and black women in South Africa.

The interaction of race and gender in South Africa is of a particular kind. In 1930 white women in South Africa were given the vote after a campaign led by Bertha Solomon. One of the prime considerations of the Hertzog government in giving women the vote was to secure racial domination. By giving the vote to all white women the Cape African vote was proportionally more than halved (Linton, quoted by Lacey, 1979 : 40).

The fundamental interaction between white and black women takes place within a labour relationship. (3) In this relationship it is usually white women who are dominant and black women who are subservient. The most common occurrence of the labour relationship takes place in the domestic sphere of the white woman, where she employs the black woman as a domestic servant. It is through the employment of a black domestic servant that white women can partially escape some of the gender exploitation in South Africa.

The most common reason given by white women for employing a domestic servant is to enable themselves to devote more time to the development of their children (Cock, 1980 : 53). This is not only done at the expense of the domestic servant's own children, but the black domestic servant, in many cases, becomes an important caretaker (nanny) of the white children. This role of the black domestic servant, being responsible for the domestic work and a significant share of the childcare of the white children of her employee, contributes to (i) her long working hours and (ii) to a system of nanny-monopolized childrearing.

In nanny-monopolized childrearing the consequences of mother-monopolized childrearing (see 4.7 above) thus acquire an extra dimension by the introduction of race into the gender-creation paradigm. As mother-monopolized childrearing has a fundamental influence on genderism, nanny-monopolized childrearing may have a fundamental influence on racism in South Africa. (4)

Cock, Emdon and Klugman (1986) found that ninety-six percent of black women who work outside their own domestic units as wage workers are also mothers. Sixty-six percent of these women have preschool children (Cock, Emdon and Klugman, 1986 : 68-69). Whereas white women, in many cases, withdraw (temporarily or permanently) from the labour market outside their own domestic units with the birth of their children, the same is not true for black

women. On the contrary, black women's need for employment increases with the birth of their children.

This phenomenon springs from the reality that the black mother is in many cases responsible for the maintenance and reproduction of the family. This reality is the result of (i) the formal and informal control system regulating the black family as a geographical unit and (ii) the system of migrant labour. In the system of migrant labour men work in the "mainstream" capitalist mode of production, while women are responsible for the maintenance and reproduction of the family as a unit producing labour power.

Through this system the wages of the proletariat are forced even lower (see 6.2 above). This is primarily made possible by the system of gender division of labour (see 5.5 above). "... [I]n addition to their contribution to domestic and agricultural production, women's work has an important effect on the dominant capitalist sector, which benefits from the higher degree of exploitation made possible by this system" (Beneria, 1979 :219).

Cock (1980) found a major difference in the feminist (gender-class) awareness of white women and the black women they employ as domestic servants. Only twenty-four percent of domestic servants have ever heard of the women's liberation movement. On the other hand, eighty-six percent of their employers have heard of the movement. However, while only six percent of the white women thought that the movement "was a good thing", all the women they employed thought so. "Compared to their white, mainly middle- class employers these women have a much greater 'feminist consciousness' or insight into discrimination against women...But their indignation about discrimination against women is clearly overshadowed by their consciousness of discrimination against blacks (Cock, 1980 : 116). (5)

South African society is characterized by extreme inequalities and exploitation. The exploitation of black domestic servants is generated through three interacting social structures; gender, race and class. These structures are mutually dependent on each other to constitute the specific exploitation of the black domestic servant and black women in general.

7.5 Notes and references

1. For Marx and Engels the class struggle is the central dynamic of social evolution. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes" (Marx and Engels, 1968 : 35-36).
2. "A sexist ideology defines women as secondary, inferior and dependent. There are several points of similarity between racism and sexism: while both operate at a relatively autonomous level, they are in the last instance determined by the system of production and class structure of which they form a part. Both are justificatory ideologies, serving to legitimise a system of domination. They have been used to justify both economic exploitation and the denial of political rights" (Cock, 1980 : 261).
3. Cock (1980) found that many domestic workers feel that employers perceive them only in their occupational role (Cock, 1980 : 94). According to Davis, Eaton found that white women confessed that they employed black servants "because they look more like servants" (Eaton, quoted by Davis, 1982 : 94). "The tautological definition of black people as servants is indeed one of the essential props of racist ideology" (Davis, 1982 : 94).
4. "Domestic workers play an important role in the reproduction of labour power, the capacity to work. This includes not only physical maintenance

(through the preparing of meals and the laundering of clothes), but also ideological maintenance. The role of the domestic worker is important in socialisation into the dominant ideological order. Often it is the only significant interracial contact whites experience, and they experience this relationship in extremely asymmetrical terms. Many white South African children learn the attitudes of racial domination from domestic relationships with servants and 'nannies'" (Cock, 1980 : 9).

5. In general, white ("Madams") and black ("Maids") are both victims of exploitation in the South African society. "'Maids' (paid) and 'Madams' (unpaid) are both domestic workers. The paid worker is dependent on her employer but does not accept the legitimacy of her own subordination in the social order. She is not a deferential worker. The unpaid worker, on the other hand, is dependent on her husband, but usually accepts the legitimacy of her own subordination and is a deferential wife" (Cock, 1980 : 84c).

Nevertheless, "While all women in South African society are subject to the sexual [gender] domination [exploitation] that operates in a system of 'sex' [gender] bars, the system of racial domination provides white women with important mechanisms of escape from this structure of constraints. The employment of cheap, black domestic labour is one instance and this present a challenge to conventional feminist analysis" (Cock, 1980 : 8).

CHAPTER 8

FORMULATION OF A CONTEMPORARY MATERIALIST FRAMEWORK

"Eventually, someone will have to write a new version of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, recognizing the mutual interdependence of sexuality [gender], economics, and politics without underestimating the full significance of each in human society" (Rubin, 1978 : 155).

8.1 Problem synopsis

In this chapter I shall incorporate the differences I have with classical and contemporary marxism into the formulation of a materialist framework, I will use the classical marxist paradigm as my basic reference.

8.2 Classical historical materialism

"The general result at which I arrived and which, once won, served as a guiding thread for my studies, can be briefly formulated as follows: In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general" (Marx, 1968 : 181).

For Mandel historical materialism is "the science of social structures" (Mandel, quoted by Lever, 1982 : 21). Marx's development of the theory of historical materialism enabled marxism to supply a material base for the evolution and existence of social structures. For Marx the basic domain of society is constituted by the mode of production. This material base is an economic structure. A society is divided into a material base and a superstructure. The superstructure includes the political, legal, religious and ideological systems of a society. The material base always determines the general character of the superstructure, despite the reality that there is a dialectical relationship between the base and the superstructure.

Engels formulates this dialectic as follows: "Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc. development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. It is not that the economic situation is cause, solely active, while everything else is only passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which ultimately always asserts itself..." (Engels, quoted by Adler, 1978 : 260).

According to Marx the economic character of the mode of production is made up by the interaction of the relations of production and the forces of production. The relations of production are relations between human beings that extends into the economic aspect of social life. This includes the production, exchange and distribution of material goods. Raw materials (land, plants, etc.), instruments of labour (technology) and labour power (the capacity to perform labour - see 5.2 above) together form the forces of production. Together raw materials and instruments of labour form the means of production. The forces of production are responsible for the productive level of a society. Control/ownership of the means of production leads to the possibility of some people exploiting others who do not control/own the means of production. In this process of exploitation some of

the products of the exploited group's labour are appropriated, and in this process social classes are formed.

Historical materialism thus focuses on the productive system of a society as the determining phenomenon in the social structuring and social organization of a society. For most feminists the reproductive system is a fundamental phenomenon in the process of social organization. For this reason especially marxist feminists have attempted to incorporate "reproduction" (gender-affective-production) into an historical materialist analysis of the social organization of society. I shall therefore first redefine the relationship between "production" and "reproduction". As the domestic mode is the basis from which I start my social analysis, I shall then incorporate the relationship between "production" and "reproduction" in the domestic mode in order to formulate my materialist framework.

8.2.1 Redefining "production-reproduction"

The relationship between (and interrelationship of) production and reproduction has been analysed in detail by Claude Meillassoux in *Femmes, Greniers et Capitaux* (1975). For Meillassoux the domestic community is the basic unit of production and the domestic society is thus the starting point of any social analysis of a society. In an attempt to understand the relations of production, Meillassoux places the relations of production within the context and structure of the reproduction of a social system. A determining value is assigned to the process responsible for the reproduction of the labour force in the domestic community in relation to the production of the means of subsistence within the social system as a whole. This process of reproduction (in Meillassoux's formulation, the continued existence of the domestic society), depends upon the reproduction

of each of the domestic communities which serve as the basic production units of society.

For Meillassoux power in the basic production units is directly linked to control of the (all-important) process of reproduction. This control (power over - see 3.4 above) results in the subordination of women to men. Within this analysis a direct and constantly social determining link is thus made, not only between production and reproduction, but also between reproduction and power. Despite various problems in Meillassoux's analysis (see Mackintosh, 1977; Edholm, Harris and Young, 1977; Beneria, 1979), *Femmes, Greniers et Capitaux* made an important contribution to marxism in emphasizing the interdependence and integration of production and reproduction within any given social system.

Within my analysis I view the relationship between production and reproduction as follows. First, according to Renata Bridenthal, "The relationship between production and reproduction is a dialectic within a larger historical dialectic. That is, changes in the mode of production give rise to changes in the mode of reproduction" (Bridenthal, 1976 : 5). I agree with Bridenthal's basic premise, but disagree with her conclusion.

Although the mode of production is in a direct relation to the material reality of a specific society ("the hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist" [Marx, 1978 : 103]), this relation does not mean that the mode of reproduction necessarily changes with the mode of production. Neither does the dialectical relationship between reproduction and production mean that the mode of reproduction is determined by the mode of production. Throughout the fundamental changes that took place during the transition of the mode of production from feudal to contemporary capitalist industrial society, the mode of reproduction changed little (especially as far as the

interrelationship between men and women within the (patriarchal) modes of reproduction is concerned). According to Aaby the production process will always, historically speaking, be "a set of constraints on social development. But this does not necessarily imply that elements of the production process in itself are the effective causes of a restructuring of social reproduction" (Aaby, 1977 : 45).

Second, despite the reality that the reproduction of labour power is a condition for production, reproduction (of labour power) in itself is not a form of production (Vogel, 1983 : 139). This, however, does not mean that labour performed within the mode of reproduction is valueless. Like all human labour, reproductive labour creates value (see 5.4 above) and within the dynamics of a social system reproductive labour forms an intrinsic part of the process within which surplus value is created.

8.3 The domestic mode

In our society I have distinguished two modes of production and reproduction, a domestic mode of production and reproduction and an industrial mode of production and reproduction. Primarily, the labour performed in the domestic mode of production and reproduction (childbearing, childrearing, domestic services and the general reproduction of the labour force) produces use values, while the labour performed in the industrial mode of production results in products with exchange value (see 5.4 above).

In the domestic mode of production workers are maintained; in the industrial mode of production paid. A further difference between the two modes of production is that in the domestic mode of production consumption is not separated from production as in the industrial mode of production. Since the labour performed in the domestic sphere consists of material activities, resulting in products


(mostly use values) that in turn play a vital role in the process of creating surplus value, a materialist analysis of the domestic mode of production is possible and necessary (see 5.4, 5.5 and 6.3).

8.4 Forces of reproduction and production

The crux of Marx's theory of historical materialism is that "in the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces" (Marx, 1968 : 181). Marx thus directly links the productive level/productive forces of a society and the basic social structure of that society (in other words, to the relations of production). For Marx the social structure in any society tends to be compatible with the process of production: "Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production, and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations" (Marx, 1978 : 103).

For Marx the productive forces consist of the following:

- (i) the human capacity to labour (labour-power - see 5.2 above). This labour power encompasses all the socially developed labour skills and socially developed knowledge;
- (ii) all the raw materials needed for the production process (land, plants, domestic animals and so on);
- (iii) the instruments of labour, that is technology. The last two components together form the means of production. The interaction and interrelationship of the above phenomena within the domestic mode of production have not been analysed in detail by marxist theorists.



For the purposes of this study (in analysing the social dynamics of the social structure of a contemporary industrial capitalist society) the single most important phenomenon characterizing labour power is the division of labour power in the domestic mode of production. This division of labour is influenced by the relationship of the domestic unit to (i) raw materials and (ii) technology. Within the patriarchal domestic unit the relation of the unit especially to raw materials (and to a lesser degree to technology) is primarily dependent on the position of the male breadwinner within the hierarchy of the industrial ("social") mode of production and reproduction. In other words, the higher the position the male breadwinner (as primary income source of the domestic unit) occupies in the industrial/social labour hierarchy, the more excess that domestic unit will have to raw materials and technology. The excess to technology will however pro rata increase less as for the reality that domestic technology is, in relation to industrial technology, extremely limited.

As preclass society changed to class society, the gender division of labour became more complex. The transformation process itself was made possible in more than one way by the gender division of labour (see 5.5 above). The gender division of labour is not only one of the "earliest" relations of production, but in preclass society - characterized by very limited technology - "the very act of labour specialization [division] according to sex [gender] or age is a technical innovation" (Ursel, 1977 : 32). The gender division of labour is thus not only a relation of reproduction and production, but also a force of reproduction and production. Not only is there thus a dynamic relationship between the gender relations of reproduction and production and the forces of reproduction and

production, but this relationship is mutually determined. The system of gender division of labour is thus more than just a labour process.

The general marxist proposition - "By social we understand the co- operation of several individuals no matter what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a productive force" (Marx and Engels, quoted by Nicholson, 1986 : 175) - is thus especially true for the system of gender division of labour in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society.

Furthermore, when applying the marxist argument of social transformation - in the industrial mode of production - ("At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production....from forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution" - Marx, 1968 : 181-182) to the domestic mode of reproduction and production, we can explain why the domestic mode does not necessarily change with the industrial mode (for example, from feudal to industrial capitalist). This is the consequence of the reality that the domestic mode has its own forces of reproduction and production which have not changed fundamentally over the last few centuries. In other words, since the internal dynamics characterizing labour power as a force of production in the domestic mode (in other words, the gender division of labour power) and the interrelationship of this force of production with the means of production did not change fundamentally, the mode of reproduction and production thus remained patriarchal. In the domestic mode of reproduction and production the gender division of so-called "unproductive" labour (as both a relation and a force of production) leads to the creation of a system of labour or-

ganization which I have labelled "mother-monopolized childrearing" (see 4.6 above).

8.5 Relations of reproduction and production

For Marx relations of production (in the industrial mode) are the relations between human beings which have to do with the production of the material aspect of social life; in other words, with the production, exchange and distribution of material goods (see 3.2 above). In working with the interrelationship of reproduction and production within the domestic mode (see 2.4 above) I thus work with a domestic mode of reproduction and production. Relations of production within this mode are therefore also redefined as relations of reproduction and production, and thus the relation between human beings which has to do with the reproduction and production of both the conditions and the material aspects of social life itself. In other words, with both (i) the production, reproduction and finally social organization of labour and labour power and (ii) the production, exchange and distribution of social goods.

The system of mother-monopolized childrearing (as a way in which not only the perpetuation of the appropriation of women's labour and labour power by men takes place, but especially as the way in which this appropriation is made possible - see 5.5 above) is a fundamental part of the most basic relation of reproduction and production in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society. This system is fundamental to the process that enables; (i) the production, reproduction and social organization of labour and labour power and (ii) the production, exchange and distribution of social goods to take place in their specific form in this specific kind of society (see 3.2 above). Gender identity is socially the most important characterization of relation of reproduction and

production, as productive labour is socially characterized most fundamentally by gender division (see 5.5 above).

As the hierarchical system of mother-monopolized childrearing (as a relation of reproduction and production - thus as a social phenomenon with a determining influence on the social structure) is closely intertwined with the specific process of gender identity creation ("This [in a contemporary, industrial, capitalist society] gender creation is brought about through the gender division of unproductive labour, which (as a system) develops into what I labelled the mother-monopolized mode of childrearing" see 5.5 above), gender identity itself is structured within a hierarchical gender system. This system, which is also a relation of reproduction and production leads to the establishment of unequal gender authority (see 3.4 above).

Since authority is the single most important phenomenon in the social process whereby some social classes can obtain actual power ("authority [a recognized and legitimate right to control the behaviour of others]...leads to...social systems of domination [behavioural pattern that follows when - in interaction - some people have more authority than others]...plus. ~~actual~~ power ['a control of behaviour of others established by means of manipulating resources']...equals... ~~real~~ power [the ability to control the process of human interaction"] - see 3.4 above), unequal (and hierarchical) gender authority leads to the gender division of labour which is dominated by the social class: "men" (see 7.3 above).

8.6 The inter-relationship of the relations and the forces of reproduction and production

For Marx the relations of production correspond to the forces of production. Whenever the forces of production and the relations of production come into conflict with each other, the process of social transformation begins. As the super-

structure is not the pure phenomenon of the base (since it is also the condition whereby its reality is materialized), so also are the relations of reproduction and production not the pure phenomena of the forces of reproduction and production, but also the condition for the "socialization" of the forces of reproduction and production. Since the gender division of labour (in the domestic mode) is both a force and a relation of reproduction and production, the forces and relations of reproduction and production do not come into conflict with each other. Consequently the patriarchal domestic mode of production has a kind of "structural protective mechanism" against fundamental change. (1)

8.7 Notes and references

1. In this study the term "social structure" is not used in a descriptive (as used in Anglo-American functionalism) or reductionist (as used in French structuralism) way. To me structure is both the medium and outcome of social action. This simultaneous production and reproduction of social action is labelled the "duality of structure" by Giddens (Graaff, 1986 : 9).

"Interaction is constituted by and in the conduct of subjects; structuration, as the reproduction of practices, refers abstractly to the dynamic process whereby structures come into being. By the duality of structure I mean that social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution" (Giddens, 1976 : 121).

"In the theory of structuration, I argue that neither subject (human agent) nor object ('society', or social institutions) should be regarded as having primacy. Each is constituted in and through recurrent practices. The notion of human 'action' presupposes that of 'institution', and vice versa. Explication of this relation thus comprises the core of an account of how it is that the structuration (production and reproduction across time and space) of social practices take place...The most important casual exchange of words involves the speakers in the long-term history of the language via which their words are formed, and simultaneously in the continuing reproduction of their language" (Giddens, quoted by Graaff, 1986 : 31).

CONCLUSION

"The true liberation of women and true communism will only begin when the struggle of the masses against this petty domestic economy begins (led by the proletariat in power), or to be more precise, when this economy is totally transformed into large scale socialist economy" (Lenin, quoted by Delphy, 1984 : 73).

"One should identify oneself with the universe itself. Everything that is less than the universe is subjected to suffering..." (Weil, quoted by Griffin, 1984 : 219).

"A positive and encouraging sign of this changing consciousness is the growth of the feminist movement which is seeking to challenge and change the artificial and hierarchical division between the sexes into that of a direct, autonomous and balanced relationship. Sadly, some sections of the movement are serving to support the dominant masculine consciousness by emulating some of its negative tendencies in their attempts to secure positions of power. However, many feminists are discovering that it is not enough to secure positions of power within the current masculinist structure because this is in effect only changing the content and not the form. They have begun to apply their perspectives and visions as feminists towards creating an entirely new blueprint for society" (Leland, 1983 : 71).

Human beings are socially created. The fundamental dynamics of this social process are social structures. In this study I argue that marxism has paid far too little attention to the influence of the "gender division of labour" on the social structure. Consequently, marxism fails to confront the specificity of the essential social structures which constitute women's exploitation. This is the result of

their inability to place women's exploitation within the general ethos of exploitation, objectification and domination.

In this study I argue that (in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society) the system of gender creation makes a fundamental contribution to the general ethos of exploitation, objectification and domination (see 4.7 above). The contribution of this study to the above problems is thus limited to the specific area of the social phenomenon of gender, and even more specifically to certain social phenomena situated within the gender framework of a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society.

First of all I argue that gender is an all important social phenomenon in the working of the social structure of a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society. Gender-creation is a social process par excellence (see 4.3 above). For Delphy, "The concept of class starts from the idea of social construction and specifies the implications of it. Groups are no longer *sui generis*, constituted before coming into relation with one another. On the contrary, it is their relationship which constitutes them as such. It is therefore a question of discovering the social practices, the social relations, which, in constituting the division of gender, create the groups of gender..." (Delphy, 1984 : 26).

In our society "gender" is the single most important cognitive framework in terms of which human beings interpret their world (see 4.4.3 above). Once stabilised, gender identity becomes the basic means by which lived experiences are defined and recollected. For Stoller identity - "I am a girl", "I am a boy" - is the primary, most permanent and far-reaching identity any human being holds (Stoller, 1968 : vi-ix). This social creation takes place within the socio-political system of patriarchy. Patriarchy is characterized by mother-monopolized childrearing. In this social system the woman-mother is the fundamental or-

ganizational feature of the gender creation system, and it is basic to the creation of the gender division of labour (see 4.5 and 5.5 above).

The contribution of this study to our understanding of mother- monopolized childrearing is threefold:

- (i) that the mother-monopolized mode of childrearing is not a way in which husbands perpetuate their appropriation of their wives' labour, but mother-monopolized childrearing makes this appropriation possible in the first place (see 5.5 above);
- (ii) that childrearing and domestic labour are material activities resulting in products (directly or indirectly through the production of use value). These products play a vital role in the creation of surplus value (see 5.4 above). A material analysis of domestic labour is thus possible and necessary;
- (iii) that the main problems resulting from the social system of mothering are:
 - (a) the different abilities of men and women as far as "identification" and "intimacy" are concerned (see 4.7.1 above); (b) the creation of the ethos of competition and domination (see 4.7.2 above) and (c) the interaction between human beings and between human beings and nature which is characterized by objectification, exploitation and domination (see 4.7.3 above).

I have referred to "shared parenting" as an essential condition for fundamentally changing the social structure of a patriarchal society and addressing the inherent problems of mothering. However, within a materialist research tradition, shared parenting is not a moral obligation/choice but must be a structural reality. For

this reason the forces of reproduction and production of the domestic mode must undergo fundamental change.

Second, I argue that gender is primarily created in the domestic mode of reproduction and production (see 4.5 above). It is through the domestic mode that people enter into relations of reproduction, production, exchange and consumption. Consequently, I turn the traditional hypothesis (in both marxist and nonmarxist theory) that the industrial mode of production and reproduction is the centre of social production and reproduction upside down. In other words, instead of seeing the domestic mode of production as marginal to a social analysis of society, I see it as the fundamental dynamic in any society with all other modes of production and reproduction deriving their basic social structure from it and not vice versa.

"Mariarosa Dalla Costa considers the community as first and foremost the home, and considers therefore the woman as the central figure of subversion in the community. Seen in this way, women are the contradiction in all previous political frameworks, which had been based on the male worker in industry. Once we see the community as a productive centre of subversion, the whole perspective for generalized struggled and revolutionary organization is re-opened" (James, 1972 : 17). (See Rothwell, 1983 : 193).

Third, I do agree with the fundamental social value ascribed to labour by marxists. Nevertheless, my conception of labour differs fundamentally from the general marxist conception. I argue that the value of labour power is determined by what is needed to reproduce the worker who produced the product which can be exchanged. This reproduction refers to the value of the means of subsistence of both the worker and his successors (future generations). The value of labour

power is thus the total of what is necessary to keep the labourer producing and the reproduction of himself through children as his successors (see 5.4 above).

Consequently, I argue that surplus value is not the difference between real exchange value and the wage paid for the product. Instead, surplus value is the difference between the real exchange value of the product and the use values needed to produce the product with exchange value. In our society this most fundamental exploitation (use value appropriation) is obscured by the reality that use values are produced by women, but men then appropriate them in order to make it possible for them to produce products with exchange value. However, because labour power is seen (by marxists and nonmarxists) only in direct relation to exchange ("The capacity for labour is nothing unless sold" - Sismondi, quoted with approval by Marx, 1976 : 227), wage became the central, most important phenomenon in explaining exploitation. This patriarchal way of interpreting exploitation severely limits our understanding of exploitation. I analyse surplus value as the difference between real exchange value and the use value needed to produce the product with exchange value (see 5.4 above).

The internal logic of the above argument enables me to link directly (within one framework), (i) the exploitation of the man worker - producing a product with exchange value in the industrial mode of production - and the woman worker (wife) - in the domestic mode of production, producing the use values needed by the male to enable him to produce in the industrial mode of production (5.4 above) and (ii) the marxist view of the twofold value creation of productive labour, namely that of the value of the product and the value of sociability. This link, in turn, enables me to argue that the distinction between exchange and use value is in itself an inherent part of the general structure of exploitation. This can help to explain why the labour performed by women (in a contemporary capitalist patriarchal industrial society) is not a liberation "tool" in itself.

For women to achieve greater economic independence through performing "social labour" does change the face of their exploitation but not its character since it is still labour performed under the sway of gender identity within a social system of a hierarchical gender division of labour. The "double-day" is a prime example of the new levels of exploitation that surface when women as women are drawn into the "social labour market". For this reason Dalla Costa and James have come to the conclusion that women must refuse "the myth of liberation through work" (Dalla Costa and James, 1972 : 49).

Fourth, I argue that actual power is the control of the behaviour of others established by the means of controlling and manipulating resources (see 3.4 above). Authority, on the other hand, is a recognized legitimate and symbolic right to control the behaviour of others. It is also a necessary precondition for the utilization of actual power as real power; in other words, as political domination. As this right is symbolic, it can be possessed (as opposed to actual power) and it can also be ascribed to a group or class (such as a gender group/class - see 7.3 above). Consequently, authority can be analysed as the structural framework within which power relations function.

Together, authority and actual power form real power, which then inevitably leads to a social system of political domination and in the final instance to the control of the "real" political and symbolic value system (see 3.4 above). As structures of domination are sustained through the existence of asymmetries of resources, authority (as both a resource and a structural framework of power relations) can thus be linked to the system of gender through the existence of hierarchical gender divisions of labour (or, in other words, through the existence of asymmetrical gender relations through which unequal division of resources takes place).

Fifth, classes emerge where relations of production involve an asymmetrical division of labour which allows for the accumulation of surplus production that can be appropriated by others. The marxist argument is that women as women do not have a direct relation to the means of production. Consequently, no class analysis of women can be conducted. This conceptual framework used for class analysis does not include both modes of production and reproduction(industrial and domestic), and the interaction of the two modes in the process of constructing the social structure of a specific society. This argument thus ignores the specific relation of women to production as a social phenomenon.

In my analysis I incorporate the specific relation of women to production in a class analysis on the grounds that the gender relations of production and reproduction do involve an asymmetrical division of labour which allows for the accumulation of surplus production which is appropriated by others (men) (see and 7.3 above). I thus argue in favour of a gender class analysis.

Nevertheless, I argue that there are fundamental differences between the dependency of women (as a class) on men (as a class), and the dependency of the proletariat on the bourgeoisie. These are the following:

- (i) in the former, in contrast to the latter, dependency is characterized by a direct personal dependency and an emotional interdependency ("love");
- (ii) women are a dependency class who live directly (and not indirectly as the proletariat) on the surplus mediated to them by their superordinate class - men. (The incorporation of the composition of, and direct contribution of women to, surplus value further complicates gender class exploitation - see 7.3 above);

- (iii) gender class positions are static and assigned class positions (social caste),
and
- (iv) women are only a class "in itself", not a class "for itself".

The sixth specific contribution of this study to social theory is the reformulated materialist framework (Chapter 8). In this chapter I have reformulated the interaction of the forces and relations of reproduction and production and the components that constitute this interaction (see 8.2.1 and 8.4 above). The most important component of both the forces and relations of reproduction and production is the gender division of labour. A restructuring of this labour relationship will thus fundamentally change not only labour relations but also the social organization of our society as a whole.

The general contribution of this study to our understanding of the prevailing ethos of exploitation, objectification and domination is as follows. It is proposed that the basic ethic in terms of which human beings conduct their relations within their social, natural and technological environment is inherently problematic. For the anthropologist Sanday, "The ethic that sanctions control and domination is now the problem, not the solution. Our hopes for social survival no longer rest on domination but on harmonizing competing forces" (Sanday, 1981 : 231). For feminists to secure positions of power within the structures of a patriarchal society may change the content of their specific exploitation, objectification and domination, but not the ethic itself. Consequently I argue that the manifestation of this ethic in dialectics is problematic.

Within this ethic the world is perceived as a set of irreconcilable opposites, such as: subject/object, masculine/feminine, yin/yan, white/black, intellect/emotion, human/nature, good/evil (O'Brein, 1981 : 79). A dichotomy of opposites is thus

established which emphasises differences and not the interrelationship and interdependence of the different phenomena (Leland, 1983 : 69). This basic dialect between subject and object is characterized by hierarchy (Simonon, 1983 : 198). Consequently, in a relationship between the subject and the object, the object serves as a pure means to satisfy the needs of the subject.

The single most important precondition for the way out of this dilemma is the abolishment of the gender division of labour (and thus of mother-monopolized childrearing) and the creation of a social structure in which the self and others are (and not only "symbolized" as such, as Balbus, 1982 : 362 suggests) complementary elements of a common holistic whole.

These issues constitute the most fundamental crises in our society and for social theory. We can either confront them or ignore them.

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